

VESTIGIA ARANEAЕ – RELIQUIAE INTERDICTAE

PROJECT ANGELBOOK – VOLUME IX – PART 7



EZEKIEL REDIK YARBROUGH

Vestigia Araneae – Reliquiae
Interdictae – Project AngelBook
– Volume IX - Part 7
By Ezekiel Redik Yarbrough -
(DBM ECLIPZE)

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These pastes were never meant to last.
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Now it matters.

Now it’s immortal.

we see took eight minutes to reach us across some 93 million miles of space. We see a red flower because it absorbs all but the red rays of light; what we see are the colors the petals have rejected. We also perceive things differently one from another. Since the senses report to the mind and feelings of a personality, their report is largely dependent on the attitudes, moods, understanding, and predisposing experience of the individual. Because of our differences in outlook, someone who knows more than we do — a specialist in any field unfamiliar to us — appears to perform feats of magic.

Nonetheless truth must exist: the universe exists, hence knowledge about it also exists. In the Lay of Illusion, the god-self, Odin, the searching, probing consciousness, enters worlds of matter, descending through cosmic shelves of substantial existence to face the giant Vaftrudnir and "see how his hall is furnished," for it is by traversing spheres of matter that divine consciousness gains the mead of wisdom which nourishes the gods. But Odin refuses to settle on the bench in the hall of Illusion. Consciousness is not at home in this sphere.

During the first half of the tale (11-19) it is Vaftrudnir who questions the god: matter is being informed, inspirited, is growing and learning from the entering consciousness who here calls himself Gagnrad (gainful counsel). In the latter portion it is Odin who learns, questioning the giant until at the final denouement the visitor reveals himself as Allfather. This is essentially the course of events related in many scriptures: first, the spiritual giving its energies and impulses to the material, organizing and building forms for its habitation and embodying in them. Thereafter it is matter which is drawn inward, as it were, lending substance to the growing, perfecting, and enlarging of spiritual nature. Thus the two sides of existence are forever related and paired, with the tendency being first one way, then the other. The consciousness which has entered the realm of the giant, even though it may temporarily be captivated by the webs of illusion, will, as Vaftrudnir says of Njord, "in the fullness of ages . . . return home with the wisdom of woe" (39). So shall we all.

Vaftrudnir is taught, and we are reminded, that the grounds of the gods and those of the giants are separated only by the everflowing stream called Doubt, whereon no ice-bridge can ever form; also that the eternal battlefield (life), where the destructive and the beneficent forces do battle in man and nature, exists for that very purpose. The god is here indicating the course of evolution of beings whereby the matter-side of existence can earn access to the "ground of the beneficent gods."

Thereafter the giant world cedes its wisdom as Odin elicits the story of the past creation from his host. Verse 23 gives Mundilfore as the parent of sun and moon and indicates their use as a measure of years. Mundilfore is the "lever," or axis, that rotates the galactic sphere, the central power that imparts motion to our Milky Way. The next response, in verse 25, speaks not only of the terrestrial day and night but also of the moon's phases, which are named also in Voluspa. It is a small hint, but we may surmise without undue temerity that the bards possessed some knowledge of astronomy and of seasonal events sufficiently important to be included in the time capsule of the myths. Verse 42 is remarkably revealing when we consider that this is the giant responding: the

matter of nine worlds is he, stemming from the "hells below Niflhel" — the rootless root of matter.

In contrast with this, the spiritual human element "Life and Survivor . . . lie concealed in the memory hoard of the sun" during the long Fimbulvetr, the cold winter of inactivity when life is gone with the gods (44) from our ecosystem. They will be fed morning dew and bring to birth the ages to come. Here again we see a new life following the death of the present system of worlds. Those who are now Aesir will be succeeded by their offspring, a new Thor and a new Odin (in his son Vidar), who will "avenge the death" of the Father of Ages.

At last Odin reveals his identity by asking the unanswerable question — unanswerable by anyone but the deity himself: What had Odin whispered in the dead sun-god's ear? Well may we wonder what secret was perpetuated beyond the realm of death by the Allfather of past and future worlds.

Vaftrudnismal

1. ODIN: Advise me, Frigg, as I wish to journey
Vaftrudnir, the riddler, (1) to seek in his hall!
I crave to sound the ancient wisdom
Of him, the all-wise titan.

2. FRIGG: At home would I rather see Hostfather tarry,
In the courts of the gods;
For no other giant I know has the equal
Of Vaftrudnir's power.

3. ODIN: Much have I traveled, much have I tested;
Much from the various powers I learned.
Now I will study in Vaftrudnir's hall
How that one is furnished.

4. FRIGG: Fortune go with you, and then, in returning,
May happiness be on the roads that you take!
Nor fail you your wits, oh, Father of Ages,
When you Vaftrudnir engage in debate.

5. Hence journeyed Odin to probe by a discourse
The wisdom and wit of the all-knowing titan:
Arrived at the hall of the father of Im,
Forthwith the Thinker entered therein.

6. ODIN: Hail thee, Vaftrudnir, here am I come
In your own hall to see you.
First would I know if it's wise you are
Or all-knowing, giant?

7. VAFTRUDNIR: Who is this man, who in my hall
Hurls such words at me?
Never shall you leave this place
If you are not the wiser.

8. ODIN: Gagnrad (2) is my name. I am come on foot
And athirst to your hall;
I have wandered afar and need a welcome
And your hospitality, giant.

9. VAFTRUDNIR: Why stand you, then, Gagnrad, and speak from the floor?
Step forward and sit in the hall.
Then shall we measure whether the stranger
Or this old bard is more knowing.

10. GAGNRAD: A poor man who comes to a rich man's house
Should be silent or wisely speak;
Idle talk serves him ill
Who comes to a cold-ribbed (3) host.

11. VAFTRUDNIR: Tell me then, Gagnrad, as you from the floor
Will try your success:
What name has that steed that draws each day
Over the sons of the ages?

12. GAGNRAD: Brightmane is he; the rose-colored one
Draws the day over the sons of ages;
Held the most excellent steed by the people;
His mane ever radiates sunlight.

13. VAFTRUDNIR: Tell me, then, Gagnrad, as you from the floor
Will try your success:
What name has that steed that draws from the east
The night over useful powers?

14. GAGNRAD: Frostmane is the steed that draws in space
Each night over useful powers;
Each morning the froth falls from his bridle:
Thence drops the dew in the dells.

15. VAFTRUDNIR: Tell me Gagnrad, as you from the floor
Will try your success:
What name has that stream that is shared and divides
The grounds of the gods and the titans?

16. GAGNRAD: Doubt is the stream that is shared and divides
The grounds of the gods and the titans;
He shall run free and open forever;
No ice ever forms on that river.

17. VAFTRUDNIR: Tell me, then, Gagnrad, as you from the floor
Will try your success:
What name has that plain where the battle is fought
Between Surt and the beneficent gods?

18. GAGNRAD: Vigrid is the plain where the battle is fought
Between Surt and the beneficent gods.
One hundred days' journey on every side,
That plain is created for them.

19. VAFTRUDNIR: Wise are you, guest. Go to the bench
And let us speak, seated together.
Our heads we shall wager here in the hall
On our wisdom and wit, Guest.

CAPITULUM

20. GAGNRAD: Tell me first, if your wit suffices,
And, Vaftrudnir, if you know it:
Whence came the earth or the heaven above it,
First, thou knowing giant?

21. VAFTRUDNIR: Of Ymer's flesh was the earth formed,
The mountains were built of his bones;
Of the frost-cold giant's brainpan heaven,
And the billowing seas of his blood.

22. GAGNRAD: Tell me second, if your wit suffices,
And, Vaftrudnir, if you know it:
Whence came the moon that over men wanders,
Or likewise the sun?

23. VAFTRUDNIR: Mundilfore is father of moon
And equally so of the sun;
Both are borne across heaven each day
To measure the years for man.

24. GAGNRAD: Tell me thirdly, as you are called knowing,
Vaftrudnir if you know it:
Whence comes the day that moves over men
And the night with its dark of waning?

25. VAFTRUDNIR: Dawn it is that fathers the Day,
While Night is the daughter of Dusk.
Waxing and Waning the useful powers
Made for man's measure of ages.

26. GAGNRAD: Tell me fourthly, as you are named forewise,
Vafrudnir, if you know it:
Whence came the winter or the warm summer
First to the forewise powers?

27. VAFTRUDNIR: Windcool is named the father of Winter
But Mild is the summer's sire; (4)

28. GAGNRAD: Tell me fifthly, as you are named pastwise,
Vafrudnir, if you know it:
Who first of the Aesir's or Ymer's kin
Arose in the times of old?

29. VAFTRUDNIR: Unnumbered winters ere earth was formed
Was Bargalmer born;
His father, it's said, was Trudgalmer;
Orgalmer his father's sire.

30. GAGNRAD: Tell me sixthly, as you are named knowing,
Vafrudnir, if you know it:
Whence came Orgalmer first among giant-sons
In the dawn of time, wise giant?

31. VAFTRUDNIR: From Elivagor (5) sprang drops of venom,
Until they became a giant; (6)

32. GAGNRAD: Tell me seventhly, as you are named skillful,
Vafrudnir, if you know it:
How begat offspring the bold giant,
As he had known no giantess?

33. VAFTRUDNIR: By degrees from the word of the frostgiant grew
Man and maid together;
Foot mated with foot and bore to the giant
A many-headed son.

34. GAGNRAD: Tell me eighthly, as you are named pastwise,
Vafrudnir, if you know it:
What is the first you remember or earliest know,
Thou all-wise giant?

35. VAFTRUDNIR: Unnumbered winters ere earth was formed,
Bargalmer was born;
The first I remember, the forewise giant
Was laid in the flour-bin. (7)

36. GAGNRAD: Tell me ninthly, as you are called clever,
Vafrudnir, if you know it:
Whence comes the wind that wafts on the wave,
Though himself unseen?

37. VAFTRUDNIR: Rasvalg is perched at the end of the heavens,
A giant in eagle guise;
From his wings are wafted the wandering winds
That howl o'er the human host.

38. GAGNRAD: Tell me tenthly, as the gods' fates thou knowest,
Vafrudnir, to the full:
Whence came Njord to the Asa-sons? He reigns over courts
And sanctuaries, begotten of Asa-stock.

39. VAFTRUDNIR: In the home of the Vaner wise powers created
And sent him as hostage to the gods;
In the fullness of ages he shall return
Home with the wisdom of woe.

40. GAGNRAD: Tell me eleventhly, where the heroes
Each day slay one another:

VAFTRUDNIR: They select the Chosen, ride from the battle,
Then sit reconciled together.

41. GAGNRAD: Tell me twelfthly, Vafrudnir, how the endless reach
You know of the gods' destiny.
Of eons' runes and of the gods'
You say what is truest, allwise giant.

42. VAFTRUDNIR: Of giants' runes as well as of gods'
The truth I tell;
For I have come into nine worlds, from hells below
Deepest Niflhel.

43. GAGNRAD: Much have I traveled, much have I tested,
Much from the various powers I learned:
What humans live when for man has expired
The dread Fimbul-winter?

44. VAFTRUDNIR: Life and Survivor, but they lie concealed
In the memory-hoard of the sun.
Morning dew is their food, and from them will be born
Ages to come.

45. GAGNRAD: Much have I traveled, much have I tested,
Much from the various powers I learned:
Whence will come the sun on a trackless sky
When Fenris has overtaken this one?

46. VAFTRUDNIR: One daughter only the Elf-wheel bears
Before Fenris o'ertakes her;
The radiant maid shall ride her mother's roads
When the gods are gone.

47. GAGNRAD: Much have I traveled, much have I tested,
Much from the various powers I learned:
Who are the maids who, o'er watery waste
Unerringly find the way?

48. VAFTRUDNIR: Three mighty rivers flow through the lands
Of the maids of the son-in-law seeker: (8)
They are hamingjor in their own right
Though they were fostered by giants.

49. GAGNRAD: Much have I traveled, much have I tested,
Much from the various powers I learned:
Which of the Aesir remain as gods
When the flames of Surt have subsided?

50. VAFTRUDNIR: Vidar and Vale shall dwell in the shrines of the gods
When the flames of Surt have subsided.
Mode and Magne shall then have Mjolnir
And do Vingner's (9) work.

51. GAGNRAD: Much have I traveled, much have I tested,
Much from the various powers I learned:
What shall become of Odin the aged,
When the rulers' reign is riven?

52. VAFTRUDNIR: The wolf shall devour the Father of Ages,
But Vidar shall come to avenge him;
Vidar shall cleave the icy jaws
With Vingner's sacred weapon. (10)

53. GAGNRAD: Much have I traveled, much have I tested,
Much from the various powers I learned:
What whispered Odin in the ear of his son, (11)
As the latter was borne on the pyre?

54. VAFTRUDNIR: None knows what you in the foretime spoke
At the pyre in the ear of your son.
With the lips of one dead have I told my tale,
Runes of old and of Ragnarok.

Chapter 14

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FOOTNOTES:

1. Vaftrudnir: weaver of the webs of illusion. (return to text)
2. Gainful counsel. (return to text)
3. Cunning. (return to text)
4. The rest of the verse is missing in Codex Regius. (return to text)
5. Icicle waves. (return to text)
6. The rest of the verse is missing in Codex Regius. (return to text)
7. Mill: dissolver and creator of matter. (return to text)
8. Or kin-seeker. (return to text)
9. Thor. (return to text)
10. Mjolnir, Thor's Hammer. (return to text)
11. Balder. (return to text)

Theosophical University Press Online Edition

The Masks of Odin — Elsa-Brita Titchenell

Chapter 14

Thor and Loki in Jotunheim

(Gianthome)

A tale from the Younger Edda.

TEXT

TRANSLATOR'S NOTES

This entertaining episode must have afforded much amusement to an audience of simple people. It is apparently an event in the history of our globe, when freezing winds accompanied the lowering of the water level as the polar ice caps spread over the continents, absorbing more of the globe's water. At the same time there was a shift in the position of the Midgard serpent — the equator, or perhaps the arc of the Milky Way. There is no doubt the events denote a period of glaciation but which ice age is open to question.

This lay bears a striking resemblance in one particular to the gods' search for the caldron which is related in the Lay of Hymer (which follows it). In both tales Loki instigated a forbidden act which was to bring down the wrath of Thor on the luckless perpetrator, but here it is the farmer's son — a lesser cycle — who breaks the bone.

Like Vaftrudnismal (the Lay of Illusion), Thor's and Loki's visit to the giant world illustrates the misperceptions to which consciousness is subject in the worlds of the giants. We do not perceive things as they really are; all consciousnesses, even the gods, it seems, are beset by the illusion which marks existence in matter.

Thor and Loki in Jotunheim

Once an icy age drew over the lands, destroying crops and killing men and beasts. Thor, accompanied by Loki, set out to remonstrate with the giant Rasvalg who, in eagle guise, fanned freezing winds over Midgard. They had of course to take a roundabout route because, as noted earlier, Thor's chariot cannot cross the rainbow bridge Bifrost which connects the worlds of men and gods: its lightnings would set the bridge afire. So they forded the river Ifing (doubt) which marks the boundary between those worlds.

At Midgard they received the hospitality of a poor farmer who had two children, Tjalfe and Roskva. To supplement the meager fare, Thor slaughtered the two goats which pull his chariot, Tandgniostr and Tandgrisenir (toothgnasher and toothcrusher). He instructed his companions to lay the bones unbroken carefully in their skins. During the feast, Loki whispered to the farmer's son that he should taste the marrow which, he said, had magic properties, and the boy cracked a bone to do so. In the morning, Thor revived the animals with a blow of his hammer on each of the skins, only to find that one of his goats was lame. In a towering rage the Thunderer threatened to destroy the farmer and all his family, but the old man appeased the god by offering his two children to be Thor's servants. Thereupon Tjalfe (speed) joined the gods on their excursion while Roskva (work) stayed to await their return.

One night on their journey they sheltered in a curiously shaped structure containing two rooms, one very large, the other small. Disturbed and alarmed by a loud roaring noise, the travelers hid in the smaller of the two chambers. Emerging in the morning they found a monstrous giant asleep nearby: the house was his mitten, the roars were his

snores. Beside him lay his sack of provender. Being hungry the two gods tried to open the satchel but even Thor was unable to undo the knots, so he set about trying to waken the giant. Three times he struck his hammer against the giant's skull, which caused the sleeper to stir and mutter something about flies, but failed to rouse him. The gods went hungry. However, to this day there are three valleys cleaving the mountain where the giant slept.

Eventually the two Aesir and Tjalfe reached the home of the king of the giants, whose name Utgardaloki means Loki-of-the-outermost-court. Here the gods were challenged to a series of contests. First, Tjalfe ran a race against the giants' champion but was ignominiously outdistanced. Then Loki, who by this time was ravenously hungry, offered to out-eat any giant. He too failed for, though the two finished together, the giant had consumed the platter as well as the food. Thor offered to drain any drinking-horn but, when he was handed a gigantic vessel, failed to lower the level more than a little. He was then asked to lift the giant's cat. Mortified by so simple a task, he nevertheless found himself unable to do more than raise one of its paws. He thereupon undertook to wrestle any giant and was laughingly faced with the giants' elderly nurse, who easily brought the Thunderer to one knee.

After these undignified defeats the gods left to return to their own sphere, accompanied part of the way by their host, who — once they were safely off the premises — proceeded to explain the illusions to which they had been prey. Though Tjalfe had the speed of lightning, his opponent in the race had been Thought, which easily outdistanced him. Loki's opponent was Logi (flame), which consumed not only the food but also the wooden platter. The horn Thor failed to drain had its tip in the ocean's depths; the whole giant world had quaked with fear as the level of the waters was considerably lowered. The cat was really the Midgard serpent Jormungandr, which Thor had moved to an alarming degree. As for the giants' elderly nurse, Elli, she was in reality old age, which brings everyone, even the gods, low in due time.

When Thor in a mighty rage raised his hammer to avenge these defeats by trickery, neither his host nor any city was to be seen on the flat plain that reached endlessly in all directions.

Chapter 15

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The Masks of Odin — Elsa-Brita Titchenell

Chapter 15

Hymiskvadet

(Hymer's Lay)

TEXT

TRANSLATOR'S NOTES

Our solar system has its home in a portion of space from which we see certain configurations of stars. Our earth rotates on its axis so that each side is irradiated with sunlight half the time and is in shadow the other half of the time as we travel along the almost circular path of its orbit. The stars we see are those on the shadow-side of our planet, that is to say those outside the solar system in the direction we face at night. This direction changes, of course, with the seasons, so that in the course of a year, one revolution round the sun, we have faced by night all the stars that surround us in our solar neighborhood. Those stars that are close to being on a level with our orbit, called the plane of the ecliptic, have been grouped into 30 degree arcs and these groups are called the twelve constellations of the zodiac. Together they make a complete circle (360 degrees). Our sun, which is situated in one arm of a spiral galaxy we call the Milky Way, is thus surrounded by the twelve "animals" (i.e., animate beings) of the celestial "zoo."

We need to have a clear picture of this scenario in order to see how the tale of the giant Hymer suggests the prelude to a new embodiment, possibly of our sun, perhaps of a planet such as the earth. According to the theosophic teachings a planet lives a number of lives with intervals of rest, comparable to death, during the lifetime of the sun. It also undergoes shorter periods of repose comparable to sleep, within its own lifetime. The pattern is analogous to that of human and other types of life which include sleeping and waking as well as death and birth.

Hymer is evidently a preliminary stage in the formation of a celestial body. His nine daughters, or aeons, are the nine mothers of the god Heimdal, god of beginnings, who, as we have seen, is a solar deity. He has a particular affinity with the constellation Aries, the ram, marker of beginnings: of the year at the vernal equinox, of the zodiacal year (25,920 terrestrial years), and of each lifetime of our planet. He is personified as the wind which, like the ram, butts, or blows, or pushes, with its head. As parent of Heimdal's nine mothers, Hymer apparently represents the beginning of the present embodiment of our solar system within the encompassing pattern of stars where our sun has its habitat. At the end of life he is named Rymer. Both names are suggestive of Ymer, a universal concept here applied to a particular case.

An interesting sidelight may be mentioned here: in the biblical story in Genesis 17 occurs a transformation with the addition of the letter H, the aspirate, which symbolizes breath, spirit, the principle of life: Abram becomes Abraham, and his wife Sarai becomes Sarah. It is possible that the Norse used the same convention to indicate the inspiration, in-breathing, of life into matter when Ymer becomes Hymer with the inbreathing of the divine power which endows our world with life.

In the tale of Hymer, the gods had learned by divination that the titan Ager — space — could supply the mead of experience whereby they are nourished, for he "possessed this mead in plenty." But when Thor commanded Ager to make feast for the gods, the giant replied: "Bring me first a caldron to contain it. Then shall I make feast for the

gods."

As there was no vessel large enough to hold the mead, the gods were at a loss until Tyr (1) recalled that his kinsman Hymer owned such a caldron. Thor and Tyr set out to find Hymer and acquire the caldron "by cunning if need be." On their way through Midgard they met Egil, the "mountain farmer, son of the dim-eyed one" — of Tjasse, the previous period of evolution. Egil was entrusted with the care of the two goats which draw the Thunderer's chariot, and the gods proceeded on foot.

At the giant's home they were greeted by the wife who advised them to hide before Hymer should arrive in fierce ill-humor. It was late in the evening when "misshapen, harsh Hymer" came home from the hunt; we are treated to a delightful kenning which describes how "icicles rattled as he stepped in, for his face forest was frozen" (10). The wife tried to soften his mood before breaking the news that their young kinsman Tyr had come to the hall bringing with him "a noble foe named Vior." (2) This emphasizes the reluctance of the matter-giant to entertain the god-energy in a way which brings to mind Newton's first law of motion: "A body remains at rest or continues to move with the same speed in the same direction, unless it is acted on by a net force."

At the giant's glare the ridgepole broke in two and eight kettles fell down, only one remaining unbroken. With customary (mandatory) hospitality Hymer ordered three bullocks slaughtered for the evening meal. Thor devoured two of them so that the following morning the giant and the Thunderer needs must set out to catch fish for food. Vior offered to row if the giant would provide bait, so Hymer, with tongue in cheek, invited Thor to take one of his herd of oxen, knowing this to be an all but impossible task. Thor, however, accomplished the feat without difficulty. At sea, "Hymer drew aboard two whales together" (21). Thor hooked the Midgard serpent Iormungandr with the result that icebergs shook, volcanoes erupted, and the whole world trembled, until Thor restored the monster to the deep.

In this story several interpretations overlap, and the descriptions may apply to terrestrial, solar-systemic, or cosmic events. The Midgard serpent we know represents the equator, displaced again and again throughout our earth's history; it may also refer to the plane of the ecliptic which is the sun's apparent path across the sky; or it may be the Milky Way which seems to writhe round the sky with the seasons like an immense ribbon of stars immersed in the "waters" of space. The serpent is one of Loki's three dread offspring; the other two are Fenris, the wolf who will devour the sun at the end of its lifetime, and Hel, the cold, half blue queen of the realms of death.

Hymer was displeased with the god's success; for a long time he spoke no word but he "turned the helm in the wrong direction" (25). This may indicate a change in the configurations of observed stars, caused either by the introduction of a new body or the destruction of a former planet; it may also mean simply a change in inclination of the earth's polar axis — something that is known to have taken place many times, leaving traces in the magnetic alignment of rocks. There is no mention of a further change of direction, yet the boat shortly reached its landing. Hymer requested the god to either

bear home the whales to the village or bind the water goat fast at the shore" (26).

Thus far we have had our attention drawn to a very curious set of objects: we see a "water goat," a man rowing, fish, the ram, the ox or bull, and the "two whales together." Translated into the ancient customary descriptions of the zodiacal constellations we recognize in them respectively Capricorn, Aquarius, Pisces, Aries, Taurus, and Gemini, all conjoined with the disturbing of the Midgard serpent. The implication is unmistakable as we realize that these six consecutive constellations cover 180 degrees of sky, that is, a half circle, or as much as may be seen at one time. Can this be mere coincidence?

Back at the giant's home, Thor was challenged to break a drinking vessel, but though he hurled it against a pillar with all his might, the chalice remained whole, whereas the pillar broke in two. When the giant's woman whispered to Thor that he should break the goblet against his host's skull, than which there exists no harder substance, the Ase did so with the result that "whole was the giant's helmet-holder; the wine cup's rim split into two" (31). Thereafter the gods were free to bear off the caldron, though not without having first to overcome the gigantic horde which pursued them. This was of course accomplished by Mjolnir, Thor's hammer.

When they reached the place where Egil, the innocent, was tending Thor's goats, one of the animals was lame, just as the previous tale. Loki had persuaded the farmer to break a marrow-bone. Here too the Thunderer's rage was appeased only when Egil offered his two children to be Thor's servants. Thenceforth, whenever Lorrider, the terrestrial aspect of Thor, is found on earth, he is accompanied by Tjalfe (speed) and Roskva (work), the children of Egil, the "innocent mountain farmer," who serve him as elemental agents of vital electricity.

The search for the caldron of Hymer, with all its details and seeming trivia, is one lay that can be read many and many a time without "ringing a bell" of understanding. Not until we apply the key of the ageless cosmogonies do we discern what may have been a method of conveying the idea that the gods are seeking the appropriate place for a star or planet to re embody. The caldron seems to represent a specific volume of space which satisfies certain requirements. A solar or planetary consciousness about to come into life must find its proper home, and this is defined as the place from which the surrounding stars present a certain appearance. There is, when you think about it, only one way to define a particular location in space, and that is to describe its surroundings. The caldron of Hymer is here pinpointed by naming six consecutive constellations of the zodiac, spanning one hemisphere or half the sky, as it appears from our solar system.

So Hymer's lay apparently tells of a celestial being preparing to enter a new manifestation: it seeks by desire for life (Tyr) and electromagnetic life force (Thor) its own ancient habitat (caldron). This most ingenious device demonstrates again and well the technique used by the sages to perpetuate their knowledge by means of tradition. People who themselves were quite incapable of grasping any but the simplest anecdotes could thus be used as unwitting transmitters of scientific fact. The breaking of the ridgepole at the giant's fierce glare and the destruction of all but one kettle hanging

from that pole no doubt struck many of them as hilarious, but within the joke may be secured the record of an astronomical event of awe-inspiring proportions, when the polar axis of rotation of a global or universal system was overturned, leaving only one "kettle" or container unbroken: the location where a globe is reborn in the space it had formerly occupied. Thor's capture and release of the Midgard serpent confirms the same pattern of events.

In Asgard the gods were awaiting the capacious vessel when to the Ting of the gods came victorious Thor bearing with him the caldron of Hymer." Now the gods drink grandly with Ager each fall "when the golden grain is garnered," as translated in some versions. It goes without saying that the harvest is the culmination of any period of activity, whether it is a day, a year, a life, or an aeon. It is then that the gods absorb the mystic mead which has been brewed in the space where a world has lived and died. Hymiskvadet

1. The Gods of Choice (3) had good hunting,
But thirsted much ere they were filled;
They shook the divining-rods, studied the signs,
And found that Ager had ample fare.

2. The mountain farmer sat outside, child-happy,
Seeming the son of the dim-eyed one;
The son of Ygg (Thor) looked him in the eye:
"You shall often make feast for the Aesir."

3. Anxiety assailed the giant at the harsh-worded warrior;
He plotted revenge against the gods;
He asked Sif's husband (4) to bring him the caldron,
"Then shall I brew your ale."

4. But nowhere did the noble gods
Or wise Vaner know of any;
At length, faithful Tyr gave Lorrider (Thor)
This friendly advice:

5. "There lives to the east of the Eli-waves,
Many-wise Hymer at the end of the sky:
My battle-loving father owns such a kettle,
A capacious brewing vessel miles deep."

6. "Think you we might that sap cooker get?"
"If we use guile."

7. That day they traveled a long day's journey
Forth from Asgard to reach Egil;
He was to guard the horned goats,

As they hied onward to Hymer's hall.

8. The son (5) found his mother's mother,
The hideous one with 900 heads;
But forth came another, gold-adorned woman
With fair brow to bring her son mead.

9. The wife: "Offspring of Titans,
I will cover you with a caldron, ye noble twain;
Often my husband is grouchy toward guests
And of ill humor."

10. Late that evening came
Misshapen, harsh Hymer home from the hunt;
Icicles rattled as he stepped in,
For the man's face forest was frozen.

11. "Hail, Hymer, be mild of mind!
The scion is come to your halls;
Him whom we awaited from far away;
With him comes a noble foe, friend of warriors, Vior (6) by name.

12. "See them under the gable,
Sheltering, fearful, behind the post."
At the giant's mere glance, the pillar collapsed
And above it the roof-ridge broke in two.

13. Eight kettles fell from the ridgepole down;
Only one, hard-tempered, remained unbroken.
The guests stepped forth as the grim old giant
With glowering glare followed his foe.

14. No good he boded
As forth on the floor
He saw standing the terror of giants.
He ordered three bullocks taken and cooked.

15. Each of the three was made a head shorter
And borne to be broiled; Sif's husband alone
Ate, before going to sleep,
Two of Hymer's oxen withal.

16. Rungner's ancient kinsman (7) thought
Lorride's meal abundantly meted.
"Tomorrow we three must, I believe,
Find fish food to eat."

17. Vior was willing to row on the wave
If the bold giant provided the bait.
"Go to my herd, if you have a mind,
You mountain-giant-crusher, to take bait!
I expect though you will not find it easy
To take bait of my oxen."

18. The god gaily hastened forth to the forest,
Where all-black oxen stood;
The thurses' bane (8) broke from the bull
The highfort above, both of its horns.

19. Spake Hymer: "You, chariot-master, (8) are terrible
When you are still;
Your works are far worse."

20. The flashing goats' master (8) bade the ape's kinsman
To row farther out,
But the giant had no desire
Farther to row.

21. Mighty Hymer drew on board ship
A pair of whales together;
But in the stern Sif's Vior
Cunningly readied a line.

22. The savior of peoples, the serpent's bane,
Now heaved the ox's head on the hook;
There gaped at the bait the one whom gods hate,
That is curled in the depths round all lands. (9)

23. Then doughty Thor courageously drew
The venomous snake aboard ship;
He hit with his hammer disdainfully down
On the crown of the head of the wolf's (10) fell brother.

24. Mountains roared,
The fields shrieked aloud;
So collapsed the former world;
The slimy serpent sank in the sea.

25. Unhappy was Hymer
As they rowed homeward;
Long time the giant spoke no word;
He turned the helm in the wrong direction.

26. Spake Hymer: "Do you share the work
Equally with me:
Bear you home the whales to the village,
Or bind the water goat fast at the shore."

27. Lorrider (11) gripped the prow and drew the sea-horse (12) up on the shore
With sprit, oars, and bailer;
The giant's billow-boar (12) he bore to the village
Through dark forest paths.

28. But still the giant of obstinate habit
Vied with the god;
Said the man was not strong, though a mighty oarsman,
If he could not break a drinking vessel.

29. Lorrider hurled the chalice at once,
The stone pillar cracked, but the goblet was whole;
Seated, he broke the hall's pillars through,
Yet whole was the cup he handed his host.

30. At length the giant's concubine, friendly woman,
Gave this advice, all that she knew:
"Hit Hymer's skull with it;
It is harder than any chalice."

31. Thor sprang up, braced himself,
Gathered his Asa-strength:
Whole was the giant's helmet-holder;
The wine cup's rim split into two.

32. Quoth Hymer: "I have lost the precious treasure,
Seeing the chalice, crushed, fall from my lap;
This word I can never unsay.
This draught was too bitter.

33. "You are free to take the caldron
Away from our court, if you can."
Twice Tyr tried to move it,
But it stood firm and steady.

34. Mode's father (13) grasped the rim
With such force that his foot broke the floor.
Sif's husband heaved it over his head;
The handles rattled against his heels.

35. They had not gone far
When Odin's son looked back;
He saw Hymer's hordes approaching
From eastern hollows, hundreds of heads.

36. He lowered the kettle, put it down,
And turned on the murderous mass with Mjolnir,
Slaying the terrible whales of stone
That hastened behind him with Hymer.

37. Not long did they travel ere Lorrider's goat
Staggered and fell half dead before them;
The loping beast was lame of leg;
This had been caused by Loki.

38. But ye have heard, whoever is learned
In god-spells may readily see,
The wage he earned from the tiller of soil,
Who forfeited both his children.

39. To the Thing of the gods came defiant Thor,
And brought with him the caldron of Hymer;
Now the gods drink grandly with Ager each fall,
When the golden grain is garnered.

Chapter 16

Contents

FOOTNOTES:

1. Tyr, "animate being" hence "god," means specifically Mars who is closely linked with Aries of the zodiac, and with Heimdal, as well as with the energetic impulse of Thor. As such, he symbolizes will and desire. Here we again see the progression from giants to gods, as Hymer, a giant, represents a parent or a past condition of Tyr, a god. (return to text)

2. Vior is, as we have seen, Thor in his capacity as the life force, the vitality of any organism. (return to text)

3. Aesir. (return to text)

4. Thor. (return to text)

5. Tyr. (return to text)

6. Thor, as vitality. (return to text)
 7. Hymer. (return to text)
 8. Thor. (return to text)
 9. Iormungandr, the Midgard serpent. (return to text)
 10. Fenris. (return to text)
 11. Thor. (return to text)
 12. Boat. (return to text)
 13. Thor. (return to text)
- Theosophical University Press Online Edition

The Masks of Odin — Elsa-Brita Titchenell
Chapter 16
Grimnismal
(Grimner's Lay)

TEXT

TRANSLATOR'S NOTES

This may be the most explicit esoteric instruction concerning the composition of worlds to be found in any extant mythology. It compares well with the descriptions of the inward nature of our universe found in other sources, such as the Qabbalah and the Persian and Hindu scriptures; indeed, if we have The Secret Doctrine as a touchstone, Grimner's teaching is startlingly outspoken.

Odin in disguise (Grimner means hooded, disguised) explains to his pupil Agnar the construction of our universe from the loftiest levels of divinity to the basest matter worlds, rounding out the sketchy picture drawn in Voluspa regarding the creative and destructive processes that go on in a universe. The astrology of the myths is not concerned with birth charts and personal predictions. It deals with the properties of living worlds, with the character and functions of their planetary deities and the interrelationships and vital forces that circulate through and among the heavenly bodies.

In Grimnismal we find the earth's two earliest races growing under direct divine supervision, Agnar, the elder, being trained by Frigga, mother of the Aesir, and Geirrodd, the younger, by Odin. Allfather causes Geirrodd to usurp Agnar's place — the second humanity to supersede the first. There is an exact parallel in the Old Testament where Rebekah is told: "two nations are in thy womb and two manner of people. . . . one people shall be stronger than the other people; and the elder shall serve the younger"

(Gen. 25:23). Then follows the familiar story of Esau who sold his birthright to his younger twin.

The third humanity is symbolized by the son of Geirrod, also named Agnar, who is instructed by Grimner, now named Varatyr (God of Being or God-that-is). The lad, having earned this privilege by an act of kindness, is taught of the formation and composition of the solar system: its "shelves" of substances, seen and unseen "planes" of theosophic literature — and the courts, halls, or mansions which are the dwellings of their respective gods. The characteristics of these mansions of divine powers are very ingeniously suggested, though no words could give an adequate understanding of their properties: human awareness simply does not include the rates of vibration that fall, whether near or far, outside the range of our sense perceptions. Until we develop the appropriate senses to cognize such substances we must be content to regard the spheres as apt homes for the powers that use them.

The first world named is Trudheim — "a holy land, near to the Aesir and the elves" (4). Its god, Trudgalmer, is that aspect of the triune deity which corresponds to Vishnu, the sustaining power of the Hindu trimurti (1) or divine triad. The other two are Orgalmer which, like the Hindu Brahma, is the outpouring, expansive force, the "creator," while the third, Bargalmer, fruitage of a life, parallels Siva, the destroyer-regenerator. The three are clearly being the three aspects of the motive force, whether in a universe or any other entity, which expresses itself as constant change. The descriptions of the twelve homes of the gods are subject to many interpretations; they can apply to the twelve directions in space which are most commonly designated as zodiacal influences, and also to the planetary powers through whose modifying characters these influences are filtered before we receive them; they may also refer to the unseen traits of our terrestrial deity, which correspond to all of the above and are modified by them. Analogy is a valid guide to understanding myths, provided it's not distorted or carried to extremes. As the twelve deities named in Grimnismal vary greatly in their attributes, it is not surprising to find included such diverse characters as Ull and Trym, respectively the highest, most spiritual sphere of life in our terrestrial system, and the one most deeply sunk in matter, the globe we at present inhabit.

It is well to remind ourselves that we are dealing with qualitative forces having infinitely diverse characteristics, not personages, however magnified. Perhaps if we could study cosmic processes and their dynamic powers on their own levels we might so perceive them, but from our human, microcosmic viewpoint they can be only dimly imagined as principles belonging to the solar universe. The figures in the myths are anthropomorphized — even by merely being named — and can give us only the vaguest approximation of their true characters and functions. Just so does the zodiacal symbology supply only the dimmest suggestions as to the various fields of influence that dominate the different directions in space. We simply are not equipped to distinguish them.

The lays are not always sequentially clear, and we find ourselves suddenly plunged into a sketchy mention of Valhalla where Odin's warriors are fed the three boars — the

results of their conquests on the earth which, as we have seen, is symbolized by a boar in the Norse as well as other mythologies. Their names, Andrimner, Sarimner, and Eldrimner, respectively breath (air, spirit), sea (water, mind), and fire (heat, desire and will), constitute a symbol within a symbol as these characteristics apply to the composition both of nature and of man. When verse 18 is paraphrased: "spirit lets mind be steeped in desire and free will; few know what nourishes the One-harriers," the deduction is that the conquerors of self are nourished by a progressive and purposeful sublimation of the desires and will. This is psychology of a high order. It gives substance and purpose to human evolution as progressive change, and affords a powerful incentive for growth to the human soul. Far beyond the notion that evolution pertains merely to bodies, there is here a realization that what evolves is the consciousness of beings, and that in the human kingdom free will plays a significant part in this process. The instruction and training of Agnar has as its practical application the promoting of an understanding of the role he — the human soul — has to play in the cosmic drama.

Odin describes his two hounds, Gere and Freke (19), his constant companions. He feeds them, Greed and Gluttony, though he himself lives on wine alone, wine or mead being used to denote wisdom. Thus the god supports and uses animal nature, though himself sustained by wisdom alone. The New Testament affords a parallel in the familiar story of the wedding in Cana, where Jesus transformed water (ritual observances) into wine (spiritual teaching). Odin's ravens, Hugin and Munin, also describe aspects of consciousness essential for gaining experience. Hugin means mind in all the many connotations in which that word is commonly used: mental proficiency is only one of its meanings; it can also be used for purpose, intent, mood, attitude, disposition — all of which apply to Hugin. Munin too has many meanings, memory being chief of these. Without memory there would be no modification of the mind. It is on such modification caused by cumulative experience that intelligence feeds and proficiency is gained, character is altered, and evolution proceeds. We are always building on the awareness of events gone by. But more than that: Munin also determines motivation, the primary factor in directing the mind and subsequent action. It is Hugin that is in danger of entrapment on its excursions, but the fear for Munin is eternal.

Allfather speaks of Tund, the river of time, which forms the moat surrounding Valhalla. Therein cavorts Tjodvitner's fish — humanity. Tjodvitner is one of the names of Fenris, the wolf sired by Loki, all the brutish spawn of the undisciplined mind. It is the werewolf that is forever fishing for human souls to draw them astray. Those who succeed in crossing the river are faced with the "Gate of Choice" or "Gate of Death," whose latch can be opened by few and which, as we have seen, leads to the Hall of the Elect — Valhalla.

Grimner then explains to his disciple how the Tree of Life is constituted and the perils to which it is subject. There has been no attempt to translate the names of all the rivers of lives. Suffice it that among them are such appellations as Waywise and War (in several forms), which suggest the characteristics of the various kingdoms of beings and their standing on the evolutionary scale. Only a few of the clearer meanings are proposed. Untranslated names, except those explained elsewhere, are rendered in italics. Then

follow the names of the steeds of the gods.

The final "blessing of Ull on him who first touches the fire" implies a promise of human perfectibility. It is a reminder that the unmanifest world of Ull — the acme of divinity in the system to which our earth belongs — is accessible. The "fire" of this uncreated "cold" world of pure consciousness can hardly be explained in terms that would be comprehensible in our existence, but the words give us an inkling of the reaches our essential self may attain.

The final verses of Grimnismal need no explanation. In them the father of gods and men reveals his many names, culminating with the telling words: "the Opener and the Closer, all are one in me."

Grimnismal

King Rodung had two sons; one was named Agnar, the other Geirrod. Agnar was then ten winters old, Geirrod eight. Both rowed a boat and were fishing when the wind blew them out to sea. In the darkness they ran aground, went ashore, and met a poor farmer, who gave them lodging for the winter. The wife reared Agnar, but the man taught Geirrod. When spring came, the man gave them a vessel, but when he and his wife brought them to the beach, the man spoke privately to Geirrod.

They had favorable wind and soon came to their father's landing. Geirrod was in the prow; he jumped ashore but pushed the boat away and said: "Go where the trolls may take you!" The vessel drifted out to sea.

Geirrod went up to the home and was well received. His father was then dead and Geirrod became king in his stead and a famous man.

Odin and Frigga sat upon Lidskjalf (2) and looked out over all the worlds. Odin said: "Do you see Agnar, your foster son, how he begets children with a giantess in a cave? But Geirrod, my foster child, is a king and rules over lands." Frigga replied: "He is so stingy, he starves his guests, if they are too numerous." Odin said this was a great lie; they made a wager on this dispute. Frigga sent her handmaiden Fulla (3) to Geirrod to warn him that a sorcerer arriving by night would be his undoing, and she added the sign that no hound, however fierce, would attack the man. It was the greatest calumny to say that King Geirrod lacked hospitality, but he caused this man, over whom hounds had no power, to be taken prisoner. The man was clad in a blue fur coat and called himself Grimner. (4) He would tell no more about himself however much they questioned him. The king had him tortured and placed between two fires. There he remained for eight nights.

King Geirrod had a son, ten winters old, whom he had named Agnar after his brother. The lad went to Grimner, gave him a horn filled with drink and said his father was wrong to torture an innocent man. Grimner drained the horn. By then his coat was on fire. He spoke:

1. "Hot are you, Fire, and all too strong!
Farther may we part, Flame!
The pelt-lining chars, though I draw the skirts up,
The coat starts to burn.

2. Eight nights I sat between fires here
With none to bring me food;
Agnar only, who alone shall rule,
Geirrod's son, in the land of the Goths.

3. Hail to thee, Agnar, in all things
Varatyr (5) bids you be fortunate!
For but one drink shall you never
Receive greater recompense.

4. A holy land I see placed
Near to the Aesir, near to the elves;
But in Trudheim Thor shall dwell
Till the rulers' reign be rent.

5. Raindales they name those dells
Where Ull (6) has arranged his hall;
Elfhome the gods gave to Frey
As a teething-gift in the morning of time.

6. There is a third dwelling where gentle powers
Covered the hall with silver;
Shelf of the Chosen was built for himself
In the dawn of time, out of wisdom, by the Ase.

7. Deep River is fourth;
Thence cool waves surge;
There Odin and Saga forever
Quaff out of golden goblets.

8. Gladhome is fifth, where golden glows
The Hall of the Chosen.
There Odin, the Maligner, daily crowns
Those killed in battle.

9. Recognized clearly by those who come
To Odin is this hall;
Its frame is of spears, roofed over with shields,
The benches are strewn with byrnies.

10. Recognized clearly by those who come

To Odin is this hall;
Wolf hangs on western door,
Blood-dripping eagle above.

11. Sixth is Trymheim where Tjasse lived,
The mighty giant of old;
Now Skade builds, the slender god-bride,
On her father's former grounds.

12. Broadview is seventh, where Balder
Disposed his halls;
On that land I know
Are the fewest harmful runes.

13. Heavenmount is the eighth, where Heimdal
Is said to rule the sanctuaries;
The watcher of the gods with joy
Quaffs good mead in this happy house.

14. Folkvang is ninth. Freya rules there,
Assigning the seats in the hall;
Daily she salutes half the chosen.
Odin owns the other.

15. The Shining is tenth, supported on golden pillars
And roofed with silver.
Forsete there lives out his days
And wisely judges causes.

16. Ships' Haven is eleventh,
Where Njord furnished his hall;
The man-ruler, the harmless,
Reigns over high-timbered holiness.

17. Hidden in thickets and tall reeds
Is the wide land of Vidar;
There shall my son dismount
To avenge his father.

18. Andrimner lets Sarimner
Be steeped in Eldrimner (7)
The best of meat!
Few know what the One-harriers eat!

19. Gere and Freke are nurtured
By battlewont father of hosts;

But on wine alone lives ever
Odin, the weapon-adorned.

20. Hugin and Munin fly each day
Over the battlefield Earth.
I am anxious for Hugin that he returns not
But I fear more for Munin.

21. Tund (8) howls and Tjodvitner's fish (9)
Plays in the stream;
The flowing river seems all too big
For the celebrants to ford.

22. The Gate of Choice is in the wall,
Holy, before the holy doors;
Fine is that gate, and but few know
How it is locked.

23. Five hundred floors and forty more
Are there in bulging Bilskirner;
Of all roofed halls it seems to me
The largest is my son's.

24. Five hundred doors and forty more
I know there are to Valhall;
Eight hundred One-harriers emerge at once
From each, when they go to bear witness. (10)

25. Heidrun is the goat in Hostfather's hall,
That nibbles the Shadegiver's boughs;
She fills the cup of creation with fine mead full,
Drink that never runs dry.

26. Eiktyrner is the hart in Hostfather's hall,
That nibbles the Shadegiver's boughs;
Drops from his antlers in Hvergalmer fall,
Whence all waters spring. (11)

27. Sid and Vid, Sakin, Akin, Sval and Gunntro, (12)
Fjorm and Fimbultul;
Rin and Rinnande, Gipul, Gopul, Gammal, and Geirvimmel,
Which wind round the dwellings of the gods;
Tyn and Vin, Toll and Holl, Grat and Gunntorin.

28. Vina is one, another Vagsvinn, a third Tjodnuma.
Nyt and Not, Nonn and Ronn, Slid and Rid,

Sylg and Ylg, Vid and Vand, and Strand,
Goll and Leiptr, which flow close to mankind
And stream down to Hel below.

29. Kormt and Ormt, and Karlogar twain, where
Thor wades each day on his way to the judgment
'Neath Yggdrasil's ash; else would the Aesir's bridge
Burst into flames and the holy waters boil.

30. Glad and Gyller, Gler and Skidbrimer,
Silvertopp and Siner, Gisl and Falhofner,
Gulltopp and Lattfot; them the high gods ride each day
On their way to the judgment 'neath Yggdrasil's ash. (13)

31. Three are the roots that run three ways
Under Yggdrasil's ash:
One harbors Hel, under one are the frost-giants;
The third, humanity's men.

32. Ratatosk is the squirrel that runs in Yggdrasil's ash:
The words of the eagle above in the crown
He bears to the Gnawer below.

33. Four are the stags with necks gracefully arched,
That gnaw on the limbs.
Dain and Dvalin,
Dunor and Duratror.

34. There are more serpents 'neath Yggdrasil's tree
Than an unwise ape can imagine;
Goin and Moin, the sons of Grave-witness, the dragon Grayback, Ghost;
The Opener and Closer, which I believe tear the tree's twigs.

35. Yggdrasil's ash must endure more than humans can know;
The stag gnaws above,
The bole of it rots,
And below gnaws the serpent Nidhogg.

36. Rist and Mist bring me the horn, Skaggjold and Skogul, Hild and Trud,
Lock and Harfjatter, Goll and Geironul,
Randgrid, Radgrid, and Reginleif,
These bring the One-victors mead.

37. Arvak and Allsvinn shall up and away
Draw the supple sun;
But under their flanks the merciful powers

Have hidden the Ironcold.

38. Svalin (14) is he that stands before,
Shielding the shining god,
Mountain and billow would burn away
Should he fall aside.

39. Skoll is the wolf that pursues the shining god
To the sheltering woods;
The other, Hate, son of Rodvitnir, (15) precedes
The heaven-bride.

40. From Ymer's flesh was the earth formed,
The billowing seas of his blood;
From his bones the mountains, bushes from his hair,
And from his brainpan heaven.

41. With his eyebrows beneficent powers enclosed
Midgard for the sons of men;
But from his brain were surely created
All dark skies.

42. The blessing of Ull and of all the gods
Is his who first touches the fire;
For worlds are opened round sons of the Aesir
When caldrons are heaved from the hearth.

43. Ivalde's sons went in the foretime
To build Skidbladnir,
The best of ships for gentle Frey,
Njord's beneficent son.

44. The ash Yggdrasil is the noblest of trees, Skidbladnir of ships,
Odin of Aesir, and Sleipnir of steeds,
Bilrast (16) of bridges, Brage of bards, Habrok of hawks,
And of hounds, Garm.

45. Now have I shown my face to the victorious gods,
To arouse good will;
All Aesir are called to the cruel one's benches,
The cruel one's feast.

46. I called myself Grim, I called myself Ganglare,
Harjan and Hjalmbare, (17)
Tack and Third, Tunn and Unn,
Helblind and Har;

47. Sann and Svipal and Sangetal am I,
Harteit and Nikar,
Bilogd, Balogd, Bolverk, Fjolnir,
Grim and Grimne, Glapsvinn, and Fjolsvinn;

48. Broadbrim, and Broadbeard, Father of Victory,
Nikud, Allfather, Father of death;
Atrid and Farmatyr. Never I called myself
Twice the same since I fared among men.

49. Grimne was I at Geirrod's, but at Asmund's Jalk,
And Kjalar when I drew a toboggan, (18)
Tro at the Ting, Oske and Ome,
Jafnhar and Baflinde, Gondle and Harbard among gods.

50. Svidur and Svidrer I was when I baited
The aged giant;
When I became the only bane
Of Midvitner's son.

51. Drunk are you, Geirrod, and out of your senses;
Much have you lost
When you forfeited all One-harriers'
And Odin's favor.

52. Vainly was it spoken, for it avails you naught,
Friends fool and trick you;
I see my friend's sword lying
Dripping with blood.

53. Ygg gains the fallen, your life is elapsed;
The protectors are angered;
Here you see Odin,
Approach if you can!

54. Odin am I now, Ygg was I before,
Tund before that:
Vak and Skilfing, Vafud and Roptatyr,
Opener and Closer: all are one in me."

King Geirrod sat holding his sword athwart his knees but, when he heard that Odin was come, he started up to move him [Grimner: Odin] from between the fires. His sword slipped from his hands and fell on its hilt as the king tripped and fell forward, and his own sword ran him through. He met his bane. Odin vanished then. Agnar was king for a long time thereafter.

Chapter 17

Contents

FOOTNOTES:

1. Literally "three faces." (return to text)
2. Lida suffer or hlid side, rank, or alignment. By implication this "shelf" may suggest the gods' being aligned by our side or, more likely, "suffering" or "feeling with" — as in the Latin compassion and the Greek sympathy from pathein, to suffer, endure and, by extension of meaning, to bear the burden of. Lidskjalf may have other meanings, but the most probable would seem to be "shelf of compassion." (return to text)
3. Fulla and Bil are names for phases of the moon. (return to text)
4. Literally "hooded"; disguised. (return to text)
5. God of Being. (return to text)
6. Winter, a "cold" or unformed world. (return to text)
7. The "boars" that feed the gods: air, water, and fire. (return to text)
8. "River of fire," the moat around Valhalla. (return to text)
9. Tjodvitner — the werewolf, Fenrer or Fenris, son of Loki, who fishes for men. Hence Tjodvitner's fish is the human race. (return to text)
10. $540 \times 800 = 432,000$, the cycle named in the Puranas which is used in a pattern like the Pythagorean tetraktys to form greater cycles, multiples of this one. The "golden age" is the longest of the four "yugas" or 1,728,000 years which is $4 \times 432,000$: "The largest of these is my son's," Balder's, or the golden age. (return to text)
11. From Hvergalmer run all the rivers of lives which inhabit or animate the kingdoms of nature. (return to text)
12. Italicized names are not translated. (return to text)
13. The names are symbolic and descriptive: the steeds of the gods translated are: Glad (Frey's), Gilt (Brage's), Glazed (Njord's), Running River (Ull's), Silvertop (Forsete's), Sensations (Tyr's), Hostage (Balder's), Hollowhoof (Hoder's), Goldtop (Heimdal's), and Lightfoot (Honer's). (return to text)
14. "The cool one," that protects the planets from those wavelengths of solar radiation

which would destroy them, is a myth held in common with those of other parts of the world; also the "sundogs" in the following verse (39), an optical phenomenon seen at northern latitudes as a dual reflection on the horizon, when the sun is rising or setting. (return to text)

15. Red-witness — red skies at dawn and sunset which bear witness to a mystery. (return to text)

16. Bifrost, the rainbow bridge. (return to text)

17. Odin's names designating different guises and functions: Hood or Mask, Wandering Learner (cf. the Apotheosis of Gylfe, where the name is that adopted by the postulant), Harrier and Helmet-bearer, etc. (return to text)

18. The myth wherein Odin as Kjaldr drew a toboggan has been lost and only indirect references to it remain. (return to text)

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The Masks of Odin — Elsa-Brita Titchenell

Chapter 17

Trymskvadet

(The Theft of Thor's Hammer)

TEXT

TRANSLATOR'S NOTES

Long ago, before humanity became thinking and responsible, the hammer of Thor was stolen by the giant Trym. Thor's hammer represents power not only of destruction but also of creation, including the power to procreate: hence Mjolnir is the symbol of marriage. Loki, agent of the gods and spokesman for the giants, is sent by Thor to find the hammer and forthwith borrows Freya's "feather-guise" and sets out to locate the irreplaceable emblem of creation. He returns with the tidings that Trym has indeed stolen Mjolnir and hidden it deep in the earth. In exchange for its return the matter giant demands that Freya become his bride. Freya, besides being the indwelling spirit of Venus, and sister of Frey, the earth deity, represents, as we have seen, the higher intelligence of our humanity; she guides and protects our human race which is her Brisinga-jewel.

Hearing Trym's outrageous demand, the goddess snorted with such vehemence that the precious gem was shattered. Indeed, all the gods, meeting to deal with this emergency, greeted the giant's ultimatum with consternation. During their deliberations, Heimdal proposed that Thor disguise himself as Freya in bridal attire so that he might himself retrieve his property. His futile protests are overruled by the assembled deities, and Thor reluctantly submits to the indignity of being garbed in fine linen and, wearing two rounded stones on his bosom, to the hall of Trym, accompanied by Loki attired as a

bridesmaid.

During the nuptial festivities the giant is appalled by the bride's prodigious appetite and thirst. Only Loki's ready wit saves the situation as he explains that Freya has fasted long in anticipation of this happy event. When Trym bent to kiss his bride and, raising the veil, met the Thundergod's lightning glare, he reeled back the length of the hall from the impact. Again Loki intervened with an explanation which fortunately satisfied the giant (who evidently was a bit dimwitted).

Trym ordered Mjolnir to be brought and laid on the bride's lap to consecrate the marriage. And so it was that the power of Thor was restored to the god after its misuse in the sphere of matter by a race not yet awake to its responsibility as a humanity. It may not be out of place here to note that our own hedonistic age is apparently not the first to misuse creative and destructive power. The creativity symbolized by Thor's hammer — the power to set in motion vortices of action to contain life and organize forms for gods to occupy — can obviously be applied on many levels of existence. Our earth provides analogous examples: from the proliferation of mineral crystals through the many ingenious devices plants have for disseminating spores and seeds; through the seasonable mating of animals to human sexuality, each stage of development opens up more opportunities than the last for creativity. We humans are not limited to the physical world in our creations; we enjoy greater freedom of creativity than at any previous stage of progress: our versatile intelligence and exclusively human intuition are gateways to worlds of science and art, to reaches of inspiration and philosophic and spiritual ideals not available to "the dwarfs in Dvalin's train." This places us in a position of responsibility for the governance of our earth and the kingdoms beneath the human which follow our lead.

It should be mentioned that theosophic history records that, since the age when the creative power came to earth from the realm of the gods, the planet has undergone even grosser materiality than that which prevailed when Thor's hammer was stolen, at which time it was comparable to its present condition. We have since then descended even further and begun the reascent. At the midpoint of its life, the earth's heaviest atoms began to radiate away their substance, i.e., radioactivity began. This was millions of years ago, though it was only recently discovered. The planet should continue to refine its matter (with intervals of consolidation that should become progressively briefer) until it eventually dies. We are, according to Brahmanic and theosophic chronology, past the nadir or turning point when we began to wend our slow steps once more upward in spiritual growth. The tale of Volund relates how the most material humanity fared in that, the planet's darkest hour (pp. 202-210).
Trymskvadet

Wroth was Wing-Thor when he awoke and missed his hammer. He shook his beard and tore his hair. Son-of-Earth groped about him and his first words were:

THOR: Hear me, Loki. What I have to say no one knows, neither on earth nor in the heavens: the hammer has been stolen from the Ase.

They went to the court of beautiful Freya and his first words were:

THOR: Lend me, Freya, your featherguise, that I may find my hammer.

FREYA: I would give it to you though it were of gold. I would give it though it were silver.

Loki flew, the featherguise whirred; he left the Aesir's courts and entered the giant world, where Trym the thurse (1) prince sat on the high seat twining golden collars for his hounds and braiding the manes of his horses.

TRYM: How is it with Aesir? How is it with elves? Why are you come to the giant world?

LOKI: Ill is it with Aesir. Have you hidden Lorrider's (2) hammer?

TRYM: I have hidden Lorrider's hammer eight days' journey beneath the ground; no man shall fetch him back again unless he bring me Freya to wife.

Away flew Loki, the featherguise whirred; he left the giant world and entered the Aesir's courts; there Thor met him in the middle of the court, and his first words were:

THOR: Did you make the errand as well as the effort? Give air to the message from afar. Seated, a speaker oft digresses; reclining he may lie.

LOKI: I have completed the effort and also the errand: Trym, the thurse prince, has your hammer. No man shall fetch it back again unless he bring the giant Freya to wife.

They sought out fair Freya, and these words he at once spoke:

THOR: Array yourself, Freya, in bridal gown. We two shall fare to the giant world.

Wroth was Freya. She snorted with rage so that all the Aesir's halls shook. The Brisingamen was shattered.

FREYA: I should truly be man-crazy to go with you to the giant world.

All the gods and goddesses met in council; the mighty Aesir conferred on how to regain Lorrider's hammer. Quoth then Heimdall, the whitest of Aesir, wisely foreknowing as are the Vaner:

HEIMDAL: Let us dress Thor in a bridal gown and let him wear the Brisingamen! Let him wear a bunch of rattling keys, a woman's garb falling about his knees, upon his breast broad rounded stones, and bridal linen upon his head!

THOR: Aesir might call me unmanly if I let myself be arrayed in bridal linen.

LOKI, SON OF LOFO (3): Quiet, Thor! Such words! Soon the giants will settle in Asgard if you do not fetch your hammer.

They adorned Thor in bridal linen and with the great Brisinga-jewel; from his waist dangled keys and a woman's skirt fell about his knees; on his chest two rounded stones. They veiled his head in costly linen. Quoth Lofo's son:

LOKI: I shall go as your bridesmaid. We two shall journey to the giant world.

Quoth the thurse king:

TRYM: Arise, giants. Strew the benches. They are bringing me Freya to wife, the daughter of Njord from Noatun! Bring me golden-horned cows and all-black oxen to please this giant; treasures I have aplenty, gems aplenty; Freya alone is lacking.

Toward evening came guests; ale was served for the giants. Sif's man (4) alone ate one whole ox, eight salmon, and all the dainties meant for the women; and he drank three kegs of mead.

TRYM: When did you ever see a bride with a broader bite? Never saw I a bride bite sharper, or a maiden drink more mead.

Between them sat crafty Loki, who retorted to the giant's words:

LOKI: Freya ate naught for eight whole days, such was her longing for the giant world.

Trym bent beneath the veil to kiss the bride; he staggered back the length of the hall.

TRYM: Why are Freya's glances so fierce? Her eyes burn like fire.

Between them sat crafty Loki, who retorted to the giant's words:

LOKI: Freya slept not for eight whole nights, such was her longing for the giant world.

There entered the giant's sister to ask for a bridal gift. She begged:

TRYM'S SISTER: Give me the redgold rings from your hands if you would win my love and my favor.

TRYM: Bring in the hammer to consecrate the bride. Lay Mjolnir in the maiden's lap; join our hands with the wedding band.

Then smiled the heart in Lorrider's breast, as the hardheaded hammer he felt. First he slew Trym, the thurse king, then lamed all of his kin. He slew the aged giant sister who had dared to ask a bride's gift; blows she received, not rings and coins, hammerblows instead of gems.

Thus came the hammer once more to Odin's son.

Chapter 18

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FOOTNOTES:

1. Uninspired matter giant. (return to text)
 2. Thor. (return to text)
 3. "Leafy isle": earth. (return to text)
 4. Thor. (return to text)
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The Masks of Odin — Elsa-Brita Titchenell
Chapter 18
Kvadet om Rig
(The Lay of Rig)

TEXT

TRANSLATOR'S NOTES

Long, long ago, the human race had not yet acquired the abilities which distinguish us from the beasts today: the powers of speech, of abstract thought, of artistry, creativity, and empathy. This is the tale of our awakening into rudimentary humanhood, initiating the process of training, honing, and perfecting the human instrument — something which is still continuing today.

Rig (1) is a ray of Heimdal, "the whitest Ase," a solar influence. Symbolically he is allied with Tyr, the god of beginnings, and with the zodiacal constellation Aries. The lay relates how the descent of this godlike influence into the humanity of that early time took place in three stages. Humanity was still dumb, lacking mental power, and vegetated aimlessly, drifting with infinite slowness along the evolutionary way without incentive or desire for growth, when the compassionate gods looked back and saw their plight. And so "fared along green paths the mighty, mature, wise Ase, powerful, manly, wandering Rig" (1). He descended among mankind to aid in awakening man to his potential as an asmegir, a godmaker.

The first attempt was unsuccessful: the door of the human abode, a miserable hovel, was closed (2). At the second descent, the god found man in a comfortable homestead, whose door was ajar (13) — partially receptive; the third venture found man dwelling in

a mansion whose "door stood open" (23): these human forms were fit to receive the divine influx of self-conscious mind.

From that time forward the human race became self-aware, able to determine its destiny. With thought came freedom of will and with choice came responsibility. The human being was now accountable for his thoughts and actions on moral and intellectual levels as well as on merely physical grounds, as before.

It is noteworthy that the progeny of the god in the third dwelling was taught by his divine father, given runes of wisdom, and successfully gained for himself the title "Rig." This race gave rise to succeeding humanities, whereof the youngest, King, was proficient in healing and "learned birdsong," meaning he could understand the languages of nature, possessed insight and understanding.

In the lay's abrupt and unexpected conclusion, King is warned by a crow to pursue more manly objectives than hunting birds: he should "ride a horse, hew with sword, and fell the foe" — symbols for learning to control the animal nature, to grasp the sword of will or knowledge, and to slay the enemy of human progress — egoism. The warning could be a premonition of the ensuing race's perversion of its divine endowments. The tale of Rig is often taken to lend support to the caste system that exists in most societies, whether openly or unrecognized. Be that as it may, it holds far greater import as well. We must bear in mind the structure of myths, which may repeatedly disclose deeper layers of meaning to the limit of our individual understanding. If we regard evolution primarily as the unfolding of consciousness, with forms and personalities following suit, we see the divine compassion in the descent of Rig, our divine parent, who came to endow us with the specifically human qualities which, after many a winding of the course of our lives, will bring the perfection of our species.

Kvadet om Rig

In former times men say that a certain one of the Aesir named Heimdall arose and rode along a seashore, came to a homestead, and named himself Rig. From that story comes this lay.

1. Began to stride along green lanes
The strong, mature, wise Ase,
Powerful, manly, wandering Rig.

2. Continued along the middle of the road,
He came to a cabin whose door was closed
And entered. There was fire on the floor,
Seated by the hearth a grayhaired couple,
Ae and Edda (2) in an ancient kerchief.

3. Rig knew how to advise them,
Seated himself in the middle seat
With the hall's folk on either side.

4. Edda served him simple fare,
A loaf, heavy and thick, of coarse grain;
Then brought more food to the table,
Soup in the bowl was placed on the board,
Simmered veal, the best of fare.

5. Rig knew how to advise them,
Then rose and prepared for rest;
He lay in the middle of the bed
The hall's folk on either side.

6. Three nights he dwelt with them together,
Then strode away down the straight road.
Nine months went by.

7. A son bore Edda, he was water-sluced,
Had swarthy skin and was named Thrall.

8. His skin was wrinkled, his hands were rough,
With knobby knuckles and broken nails;
The fingers were thick, the face unsightly,
His back was bent, his heels were long.

9. He grew and flourished, exerted his strength
To bind osiers, prepare burdens, and hauled wood all day.

10. There came to the homestead a wandering wench
With scarred soles, sunburnt arms and downbent nose.
Her name was Tir.

11. She sat in the middle of the bench;
With her sat the son of the house.
They whispered and giggled, prepared a bed,
Thrall and Tir in burdensome days.

12. Contented they dwelt and bore children. . . .

[Here follow the names of their twelve sons and ten daughters.]

They laid out farms, fertilized fields, bred swine,
Herded goats, dug peat.
From them are descended the race of thralls.

13. Rig strode along the middle of the road,
Came to a hall where the door was ajar;

He entered in, there was fire on the floor,
At their tasks were seated the dwellers.

14. Afve and Amma (3) owned the house.
The man was whittling a tree bole for a loom,
Wore a trim beard and his hair combed down,
A fitted shirt. A chest stood in the corner.

15. The wife spun yarn at a whirring wheel,
Spread her arms and built a weft,
Wore a kerchief round her hair,
A scarf at her bosom,
And brooches on her shoulders.

16. Rig knew how to advise them,
Sat between them on the bench
With the folk on either side. . . .

[Here a part of the lay is missing.]

17. Rig knew how to advise them,
Rose from the table, prepared for sleep;
Lay in the center of the bed with the local folk on either side.

18. Three nights he remained,
Then strode on down the middle of the road;
Nine months went by.

19. A child bore Amma, it was water-sluced and named Karl; (4)
The lad was diapered, pink and pretty, with sparkling eyes.

20. He grew and flourished;
Tamed oxen, made plows,
Timbered houses and tall barns,
Crafted carts and drove a plow.

21. To the home was brought a bride with dangling keys,
In a kidskin skirt, and was wed to Karl.
Alert was her name, she was adorned with a veil.
They built together, united their possessions,
Erected a home and made their bed.

22. Content they lived. . . .

[Their children are named: twelve boys, ten girls.]

From these all free men's races had their source.

23. Thence went Rig along the middle of the road,
Came to a hall with the door to the south,
And the door was open, a ring at the post.

24. He entered. The floor was strewn;
There were seated, exchanging friendly glances,
Fader and Moder, (5) their fingers entwined.

25. The man twined string, bent an elmwood bow
And fletched arrows, while the wife
Eagerly pressed linen and starched sleeves
To cover her arms.

26. She wore a tall headdress, a gem on her breast,
Blue-adorned blouse and trailing skirt;
Her brow was brighter, her breast lighter,
Her throat whiter than sparkling snow.

27. Rig knew how to advise them,
Seated himself on the middle of the bench,
With the hall's folk on either hand.

28. Moder set the table with the brodered cloth,
Brought thin white slices of wheaten bread.
She placed platters of wrought silver
Full of garnish on the table:
Fish and pork, and fried wild fowl,
Wine in a decanter, costly cups.
They drank and pleased till the day was done.

29. Rig knew how to advise them,
Rose and prepared for sleep.
He lay in the middle of the bed
With the hall's folk on either side.

30. He there abode with them three nights;
Strode down the middle of the road.
Nine months went by.

31. A son bore Moder. He was swathed in silk,
Was wetted with water and named Jarl. (6)
His hair was fair, his cheeks were rosy.
His eyes sparkled like a young snake's.

32. Jarl grew up on the floor of that hall.
He soon swung shield, twined string, bent bow,
Shafted arrows, hurled spear, swung lance,
Harried hounds, rode horses, wielded sword, and swam the wave.

33. From the concealing woods came wandering Rig, came striding Rig.
He taught him runes, gave him his name and called him son,
Gave him inheritance, possessions, farmlands,
Farmlands and ancient cities.

34. Mighty Jarl rode through dense woods,
Over snowcapped mountains to a distant hall;
Hurled his spear, shook his shield,
Spurred his steed, hewed with sword,
Roused to battle, to bloody field,
To choose to fall, won himself land.

35. Alone he ruled over eighteen farms,
Shifted goods and gave to all
Gems, precious stones, agile horses,
Shared his rings, cut the red gold. (7)

36. Messengers went forth over damp roads,
Arrived at the hall where Harse lived.
A maid had he, soft-fingered, white-skinned,
Nobleminded. Her name was Arna. (8)

37. They won her and sent her home.
She wore bridal linen and was wed to Jarl.
Together they built and were content,
Increased their race and gained old age.

38. [Here follow the names of their children.]
Kon (9) was the youngest.
There grew Jarl's sons, tamed horses, arched shields,
Cut arrows and shook lances.

39. But Kon, the young, knew runes,
Eternal runes and ageless runes.
Mighty was he to rescue men,
Soothing swords and swelling seas.

40. He learned birdsong, to quench flames,
To still pain and heal sorrows,
Had eight men's strength and clear vision.

41. Jarl contested with Rig over runes,
Performed feats and did the better.
He gained that which was his lot:
To be named Rig and to know runes.

42. Rode Kon, the young, through marsh and woods,
Let flying dart crown him a bird.
So sang a crow on a twig one day:

43. "Why, Kon the young, do you slay birds"
Better you should ride a horse,
Hew with sword and fell the foe.

44. "Other kings have costly mansions and better farms
Than you possess;
Well do they ride a keel, bloody a sword's edge
And draw wounds."

Chapter 19

Contents

FOOTNOTES:

1. Rig means a "descent" or an "involvement." (return to text)
2. Great-grandfather and great-grandmother. (return to text)
3. Grandfather and Grandmother. (return to text)
4. Man. (return to text)
5. Father and Mother. (return to text)
6. Earl. (return to text)
7. In Viking times spiral gold rings worn round the upper arm served as money, a piece of an arm-ring being cut off as payment when needed. (return to text)
8. Aspire. (return to text)
9. King. (return to text)

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Chapter 19

Loki Steals the Brisinga-Gem

TEXT

TRANSLATOR'S NOTES

Here is an instance where the naughtiness of Loki sets in motion a train of events vitally connected with the course of human evolution. At the instigation of Odin, once more in his role as destiny, karma, the trickster Loki gains possession of Freya's precious "gem of fire" — human intelligence. We have seen that Freya represents the higher, spiritual faculty of intelligence and is, as the planetary deity of Venus, the sponsor and protectress of her brother Frey's intelligent kingdom, the human race of the planet earth.

When Freya confronts Odin and asks for her gem, the god imposes a condition which is profoundly meaningful: she must incite a struggle between the world's two most powerful kings, one not to be resolved by the victory of either but by the ultimate slaying of both "by a Christian man." This phrase of course reflects the attitude of an age when Christian missionaries were militantly spreading the gospels of the Prince of Peace over the lands of northern Europe and Iceland. However, the crux is the eternal opposition of the forces of light and darkness: there can be no existence and certainly no progress without the tension between pairs of opposites which denotes life. It is a significant philosophical concept which passes almost unnoticed, lost in the levity of Loki's wiles. In a more farseeing frame, it becomes evident that Freya's battle continues for the duration of existence, alleviated from time to time as another human heart is moved to overcome the opposing armies in himself, to gain, and to give, the peace that passeth understanding. This must lend added luster to Freya's precious gem.

Loki Steals the Brisinga-Gem

From Sorla Thattr, folktale. The Icelandic thattr, like the Sanskrit sutra, means a strand (in a rope).

It is said that Loki discovered that Freya had obtained the gem from the dwarfs. He related this to Odin. Odin then demanded that Loki should bring him the gem. Loki objected that this was not to be obtained and gave as his reason that no one could enter Freya's home against her will. Odin said that he was to leave and not return until he had obtained the gem. Loki slunk away complaining loudly. He went to Freya's house and found it locked; he tried to enter but could not. It was very cold outside and he soon became frozen. He then transformed himself into a fly and flew around to all the locks searching for a crack but could nowhere find a hole big enough to enter. Finally at the roof-tree, under the rafters he found a hole no larger than could accommodate a needle. Through this hole he entered. Once in, he looked about to see if anyone was awake but he found that all were sleeping. He entered Freya's bed and discovered that she was wearing the gem around her neck, but that the lock was turned downward. Loki transformed himself into a flea, sat on her cheek and stung her, whereupon she woke up, turned over, and once more fell asleep. Abandoning his flea disguise he took the gem, opened the house, went away, and gave the gem to Odin.

When Freya awoke in the morning and saw that all the doors were open without having been forced, and that the precious gem was gone, she felt certain she knew what had happened. She went to the hall, to King Odin, just as she was, and told him that he had done ill to let the gem be stolen from her. She requested that he return it. Odin said that as she once had received this gem, so would she never receive it again; "unless" he added, "you can cause two kings, the greatest in the world, who each rule over ten others, to battle each other under the condition that both shall fight, living or dead, until some Christian man were so brave and possess so much fortune that he dare to tackle both these men and kill them. Only then shall their misfortune cease, when the same hero shall release them from the need and trouble of their perilous paths."

Freya agreed and received back her gem.

Chapter 20

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The Masks of Odin — Elsa-Brita Titchenell

Chapter 20

Grottasongr

(The Song of the Mill)

TEXT

TRANSLATOR'S NOTES

Though the mills of God grind slowly, yet they grind exceeding small. —
LONGFELLOW

Included here are two myths which seem to allude to the fourth (Atlantean) humanity on our globe. Both are the subject of numerous sagas. One is the lay of Grotte, the magic mill, as it applies to a terrestrial cycle, though, as we have seen, it also has a more universal application. The other tale is that of Volund, the smith. This relates how in the fourth great age humanity's soul — Volund — was enslaved by evil — King Nidud — the most material age of earth's and mankind's evolution.

These events in humanity's history took place some millions of years ago according to the chronology of theosophy, at a time when the human race had made the greatest material advances, surpassing in physical skills, technology, even our present age. But it was a one-sided prodigy, for man had already forgotten the spiritual values that had been given the race in earlier periods when divine influences imbodyed among the first humanities and taught and guided our human infancy.

Among the myths that can claim descent from the wisdom-tradition of antiquity the tales

of the magic mill are perhaps the most universally known, the most consistent and, in certain particulars, the most mysterious. It has never been satisfactorily explained why people on every continent in ancient times made a particular point of the magical properties of this implement: they endowed it not only with its accepted capacity to grind flour but credited it with grinding every possible substance for the gods. For this was no ordinary tool of man. It was an instrument of divine forces which supplied not only food but health, wealth, salt, happiness, peace prosperity — of mind as well as of body; it ground up continents on earth and dying worlds on the cosmic scale, and it spewed out homogeneous protosubstance from which new worlds could be formed. In the Finnish Kalevala, the celestial smith after several failures in the beginning of time successfully formed the mill Sampo, and its work of destruction and creation goes on for as long as worlds die and are born. The Maya people of Middle America to this day perform rites of the sacred mill, echoing some long lost lore. In the Edda its name, Grotte, means growth and is semantically connected with evolution.

The mysterious mill of all sacred traditions is featured in fairy tales as a remarkable instrument which was the producer of everything, faculties and properties of beings as well as matter. It was formed by divine agency for the manifestation of life and its sustenance. It was also its destroyer.

In one Edda story, two giant maidens are forced to take turns grinding riches and comforts for King Frode (his name means prosperity) during the early aeons of peace and joy known as the golden age. They work without ceasing to produce endless delights for the king's pleasure. As time goes on the monarch grows greedy for more gold and greater pleasures until he gives the maids only so much time to rest as it takes for a cock to crow or a cuckoo's call. Thus he prepares his own undoing. Inexorably, the tireless giantesses grind their ponderous revenge. Their ceaseless singing, accompanied by the creak of the millstones, grinds forth an army which, under the sea king Mysing, overruns and conquers Frode's lands.

King Mysing takes with him the mill of growth and in time he too falls victim to greed as the magic mill supplies his wants: his continent sinks beneath the waters — the classic tale of the flood which is told world wide.

As in the biblical account and other mythic tales, the king or principal personage represents a nation or race of people over an undetermined period of time, giving us in capsule form the history of ages. The flood, at once so common and so controversial, is featured in every comprehensive tradition, for it is an experience common to all mankind. Myths relate in story form the periodic rising and sinking of continental land massifs — both as rapid cataclysmic events and as the prolonged erosion and slow emergence with which we are familiar. Whether the sudden deluge they depict represents a singular happening or one that is periodically repeated, it undoubtedly made a sufficiently deep impression on human consciousness to have justified being part of the scriptural heritage of every people on the globe.

In the light of present-day science the divine mill suggests something even more

universally significant than a device to describe seismology on earth. In its versatility, in its being used to produce all kinds of things — not only physical matter but also other substances — we see a clue to its character as an implement of creation. In this respect it closely parallels the hammer of Thor, Mjolnir (which means "miller"). Mjolnir is the pulverizer of giant worlds, which reduces matter to homogeneity. It is also the agent of creation: we have seen that Thor and his hammer officiate at weddings to insure continued generation and reproduction.

The possibility of an astronomical black hole being depicted as the mill of the gods is a tempting one, for with each gain in astrophysical science regarding these intriguing phenomena we seem to come closer to a description of the mythic mill. As the whirlpool sucked King Mysing's world into the eye of the millstone, so does the vortex surrounding a rotating black hole draw all matter within reach of its insatiable gravitational field into its event horizon, where it disappears from the perceivable universe. In addition, the mysterious quasars, which emit seemingly impossible quantities of radiation at all detectable wavelengths, from infrared to X-rays, are thought to coexist with black holes in the centers of galaxies. It is an interesting sidelight worth noting that in *The Mahatma Letters* (p. 47), which was published half a century before black holes were conjectured — the substances of dead worlds were said to be "ground over in the workshop of nature."

Such divine mills apply on the cosmic scale. As for the terrestrial Grotte, the mill of growth or evolution whose massive wheels are turned by the giantesses of earthly ages, it produces the result of whatever grist is supplied by the current "king" or race of humanity. It can do nothing else. Thus each civilization or wave of characteristic properties must bring its own consequences. During King Frode's early days of peace and plenty, a gold ring lay unclaimed at a busy crossroads for ages, it is said. When it disappeared the golden age was ended. A new age succeeded it — King Mysing — who in his turn was overcome by the deluge as his lands sank beneath the waves, an event which may have reference to the sinking of the so-called Atlantean continent and its cultures. In the theosophic records, these marked the midpoint of our planet's lifetime, the most material age of all — humanity's midnight.

Significantly it was midnight when the giant maids asked of King Mysing if he had enough of salt. It was a moment of decision: to continue the creation of matter, the downward trend of the past age, or turn the evolutionary current toward spiritual growth. The king's choice brought its inevitable result: the deluge sank his ships and drew the cycle of his reign to a close. The fourth age had brought on itself its own destruction by inundation — an event which offered humanity the opportunity to rise once more toward the divine source from which it had originally descended.

Proem to Grottasongr

Skold (shield) was the son of Odin. He had one son named Fridleif (lover of peace), whose son was named Frode (prosperity).

During the age when Frode was king, the world was filled with peace and harmony. No

man would harm any other; there were no thieves or robbers. For ages a golden ring was left lying openly at a crossroads, untouched. King Frode bought two thralls, two giantesses named Fenja and Menja. They were big and strong, able to set in motion the cumbrous mill which none other could move. This mill possessed the property of being capable of producing whatever was demanded of it. Its name was Grotte.

King Frode had the giant maids brought to the mill and he bade them grind gold and peace and fortune for him. He gave them no rest lasting longer than the cuckoo took to sing its song. It is said that the two mighty maidens sang the Song of the Mill and that, before they stopped singing, taking turns at the quernstone, they had ground out an army against Frode, so that there came a sea king by night who slew Frode and took much booty. This ended the Peace of Frode.

The conqueror, King Mysing, took with him the quern and the miller maidens. He bade them grind salt. At midnight they asked him if he yet had enough salt, but he bade them continue. They milled further, until, after a time his ships sank. There came to be a whirlpool in the sea where the waters pour into the eye of the millstone. The ocean foams as the mill turns, and this makes the sea salty.
Grottasongr

1. Now are come to the palace the foreknowing pair,
Fenja and Menja;
They are at Frode's, the son of Fridleif, mighty maidens
Held as helots.

2. Forth to the mill bench were they brought
To set the grey stone in motion;
He gave them no rest nor peace,
Attentive to the creak of the mill.

3. Their song was a howl,
Shattering silence;
"Lower the bin and lighten the stones!"
Yet he would have them grind more.

4. They sang as they swung and spun the stone
While most of the men were sleeping;
Then sang Menja, her turn at the mill,
The hardminded maid with thunderous voice:

5. "Goods we grind Frode, milling out fortune,
Full fare of riches on the mill of delights;
He shall sit upon gold; he shall sleep upon down,
And wake with a will, then is it well ground.

6. "Here shall none harm another, nor harbor malice,

Nor bring to bane,
Nor cut with sharp sword, even should he find
His brother's bane bound!"

7. The hands stopped, resting; the quern was quiet;
Then called the king his ancient plaint:
"Sleep no more than the cock is silent, rest no more
Than the words I speak!"

8. "Frode, you were not wholly wise, oh, friend of man,
When you bought these thralls;
You chose us for strength and bearing,
Not heeding of what race we are born.

9. "Hard was Rungner, hard his father;
Tjasse was greater than both;
Ide and Orner, sires of our race, brothers of mountain giants,
These are our forebears.

10. "Grotte had never risen from the grey mountain
Earth's hard bedrock,
Nor would be grinding the mountain-maid,
Did anyone know her kind.

11. "Nine winters lasted our playing-time,
Beneath the earth matured our power;
Great works performed we constantly;
We moved the very mountains.

12. "From giants' fields we tore out boulders;
So the earth trembled, subsided, and quaked;
We rolled from thence the singing stone,
The heavy slab, for men to take.

13. "In the land of Svitjod, foresighted,
We two joined the people;
Hunted bears, broke shields,
Marched through the ranks of grey.

14. "We destroyed one prince, supported another,
The good Gothorm we helped with his horde;
No peace there was till we conquered Knue
There we were stopped and captured.

15. "Such was our progress in former times,
Well known were we among warriors;

Then we cut heroes with sharpened spears,
Wounded and reddened with fire.

16. "Now we are come to the house of the king,
In thralldom, with mercy from none;
Grit tears our feet, frost freezes our forms as we turn the peace mill.
It is dreary at Frode's.

17. "Hands shall rest; the stone shall stop;
I have milled my whole life's aim.
Yet the hand may not stay until Frode feels
All has been fully milled.

18. "The hands shall hold handles hard, bloodstained weapons.
Wake up, Frode!
Wake up, Frode, if you would hear our songs and
Our sayings of long ago.

19. "Fire I see burning east of the fort;
Call up the couriers, call for the beacons!
A warrior horde shall o'errun this place
And burn the Budlung's [King's] dwelling.

20. "You shall not retain the throne of Leidre,
Your redgold rings, or your quern of riches;
Grasp the shaft more firmly, sister!
We are not warmed by the blood of the whale!

21. "Surely my father's maid mightily milled,
For she saw many men go to their death;
The mill's great props, though cased in iron,
Burst asunder — yet more we milled.

22. "Yet still more we milled! May Yrsa's son, scion of Halfdan,
Avenge him on Frode;
He may be held her son, and also her brother.
We both know this."

23. The maids they milled with might and main,
Young they were, in giant-wrath;
The rafters quivered, the boom was lowered,
With deafening din the boulder burst.

24. So collapsed the former world.
Chanted the mountain-giant's bride:
"We have ground for you, Frode, as we were forced.

At the quern the women remained till the end!"

Chapter 21

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The Masks of Odin — Elsa-Brita Titchenell

Chapter 21

Volundskvadet

(The Lay of Volund)

TEXT

TRANSLATOR'S NOTES

Volund's is a tale of the degradation of the fourth humanity's soul. The three brothers and their Valkyrie-wives apparently represent the first three ages of the fourth humanity. Oldest was Egil, the innocent, whose children became the servants of Thor. The second was named Slagfinn, the hunter; the third, which in the tale gave the seed of the fourth great age, was Volund, the elf-king — the soul of humanity during that phase. There may as usual be an analogy drawn with shorter cycles having to do with different types of cultures: first, Egil, the innocent — the primitive phase; next, the hunter-gatherer stage, and third the technologically skilled. These early races were still under the semidivine guidance of their Valkyries, who serve directly under Odin as divine protectors: the spiritual soul, radiance of the divine source of consciousness. They withdrew from contact with their human spouses, as this tale relates.

Volund is a smith, skilled in the use of metals. He is captured, hamstrung, and imprisoned by King Nidud (nid: evil, treachery) and is compelled to forge treasures for the king. Secretly he forges also the magic sword (spiritual will) which figures in so many hero tales, and the marvelous ring (of cyclic renewal) which reproduces itself — analogous with the one the dwarfs wrought for Odin. During his forced labor, Volund plots a terrible revenge and in the ripeness of time his opportunity presents itself. He seduces Nidud's daughter and slays his two sons, whom in one version he serves the unsuspecting king at a feast. This cannibalism of the king establishes him as a period of time, for Time devours all his children: all that time brings to birth comes to an end in time. There is a parallel in the Greek myths, where Chronos (who also stands for Time) devours his children. In this version Volund sells the ruler his sons' skulls plated with silver.

Volund thereupon escapes in a "wingwain," a winged wagon of his own making, bearing with him the magic sword and ring, the qualities of determination to grow and the ever-recurring opportunities for renewal; with these priceless treasures of our human race "smiling Volund rose in the air; Nidud, sorrowing, stayed where he sat" (38). Volund is also called "Rungner (roar) of the featherblade." This too suggests that

aviation was known and used by the race Volund represents. (Other traditions as well record that select members of humanity escaped the sinking fourth continent which, as noted, has generally been called Atlantis, some leaving it in flying machines, (1) and settled on rising lands where they brought forth the races that belong to our present, fifth, humanity.) The evil king who was left behind was evidently a period when technology reigned, while spiritual values were almost entirely lacking.

Volundskvadet

Nidud was the name of a king in Svitjod; he had two sons, and a daughter named Bodvild. There were three brothers, sons of the Finn-king; one was Slagfinn, one Egil, the third Volund. They hunted on skis. They came to the Wolfdale and built themselves houses; there is a water, Wolfsea.

Early one morning they found three women on the shore spinning flax, and beside them lay their swan-disguises, for they were Valkyries. Two of them were daughters of King Lodver (Njord), namely Ladgun-Swanwhite and Hervor-Allvitter, while the third, Olrun, was the daughter of Kjar of Valland. The three brothers took them home with them. Egil got Olrun, Slagfinn got Swanwhite, and Volund got Allvitter. (2)

For seven years they lived together; then the women flew away to seek battles, and did not return. Egil ran on skis to find Olrun, Slagfinn sought Swanwhite, but Volund sat in the Wolfdale. He was, according to legend, the cleverest artificer men know of. King Nidud had him captured, as the song tells.

1. The maids flew south through the dark woods,
Allvitter the young, to fulfill her fate;
They sat down to rest by the edge of the sea,
These spirits of the south who spun precious flax.

2. One Egil took to wife, the lovely maid
With fine-fleshed bosom; the other Swanwhite
Who had swan's wings; but the third sister
Embraced Volund's white neck.

3. They remained seven winters, but in the eighth
A yearning claimed them, and in the ninth
Necessity parted them; the maids longed for the somber woods;
Allvitter, the young, to fulfill her fate.

4. Came from the chase the waywise hunters;
Slagfinn and Egil found their halls void,
Searched all about: Egil skied east after Olrun,
Slagfinn went south after Swanwhite.

5. Volund waited alone in the Wolfdale,
Hammered the red-glowing gold at the forge,

Letting each arm-ring lock a divine link,
Biding his bright-browed bride's return.

6. Then learns Nidud, king of the Njars,
That Volund alone in the Wolfdale waits;
By night there came men in mailed byrnies;
Their shields shone bright by the sickle moon.

7. They dismounted from their saddles at the gable
And, entering, marched the length of the hall.
Rings they saw threaded on ribbons and straw,
Seven hundred, all owned by the smith.

8. They took them off, they threaded them on,
Except one only, which they left off.
Came from the chase the hunter suspicious,
Volund had wandered a very long way.

9. Quickly he went to brown the bear-meat,
High burned the kindling of dried fir wood,
The windsere wood,
Before Volund.

10. He sat on the bearskin and counted the links,
The ruler of elves. One link was missing;
He thought that Lodver's daughter had taken it,
That Allvitter, the young, had returned again.

11. Long he sat thus, until sleep overcame him.
Awakened to sorrow:
His hands were heavy with hard fetters chained,
On his feet was a shackle laid.

12. VOLUND: "What men are they
Who have bound with bonds
The tamer of winds,
Who have tied me up?"

13. Now called Nidud, the king of the Njars: "How did you,
Volund, wise elf, find our noble gold in the Wolfdale?
There was no gold on Grane's road;
Our land is far from the mountain lode."

14. VOLUND: "I remember we had greater treasure, when all
Together we were at home.
Ladgun and Hervor, children of Lodver,

Olrun was daughter of Kjar.

15. "She entered and strode the length of the hall,
Stood still and quietly said:
'Now evil comes out of the woods.' "

King Nidud gave his daughter Bodvild the ring that was taken from the chain in Volund's hall; but he himself bore the sword of Volund. The queen spoke:

16. "See how he bares his teeth when he sees the sword
And the ring borne by Bodvild.
His eyes gleam like serpents' eyes.
Cut his sinews' strength and place him
In the ships' harbor."

This was done and he was hamstrung and placed in the Savarstad (harbor). There he smithied treasures for the king. None dared approach him, save the king only.

17. VOLUND: "There shines at Nidud's side the sword
I tempered the best I knew, and honed
With all my skill.

18. "My flaming blade is borne far away,
Nevermore to return to Volund's smithy;
Now Bodvild bears my own bride's ring
Of reddest gold, and I can do naught."

19. So sat he, never sleeping, beating with his hammer,
Soon forging treachery toward Nidud.
Two lads came running, looked in at the door:
Two sons of Nidud in Savarstad.

20. They went to the chest, they demanded the key,
Apparent was evil as they looked inside:
Jewels aplenty they saw within,
Of purest gold and precious stones.

21. VOLUND: "Come back alone, you two, come back tomorrow
And you shall be given the glittering gold!
But tell neither man nor maid in the hall,
Tell no one at all that you have seen me."

22. Early they called, brother to brother,
Each to the other: "To the smithy, away!"
They came to the chest, they demanded the key,
Apparent was evil when they looked therein.

23. He cut their heads off and laid their limbs
Underneath the water;
But the pale skulls beneath the hair
He silvered and sold to Nidud.

24. The precious stones from their eyes' sockets
He sent to Nidud's cunning wife;
And from the teeth of the two boys
He fashioned a necklace for Bodvild.

25. Bodvild came to praise the ring,
Brought it to Volund
When it was broken.
She dared tell no one else.

26. VOLUND: "I shall mend the break in the gold,
So that it shall fairer seem to your father,
Better than ever to your mother,
The same to yourself."

27. He brought her a beaker,
The best of beer,
And soon in her seat
She sank into sleep.

28. "Now am I avenged
For the harm to me,
For all but one,
The worst of all.

29. "It is well," quoth Volund,
"I stand on my feet
Although Nidud's men
Deprived them of power."

30. Smiling, Volund rose on high;
Weeping, Bodvild left the island;
Fearful for her lover
And her father's fury.

31. Out went Nidud's ill-willing spouse,
And entered into the endlong hall,
Where in the court he sat at rest:
"Wake you, Nidud, champion of Njars."

32. NIDUD: "I ever awaken bereft of joy;
Ill do I sleep since my sons are dead.
Cold is my head, cold is your counsel;
Now will I consult with Volund.

33. "Tell me, Volund,
Wise elf,
What became
Of my sons?"

34. VOLUND: "First shall you swear me by every oath:
By the hull of the ship, by the rim of the shield,
By the heart of the horse, by the edge of the sword,
That you bring no pain to Volund's woman,
Nor be the bane of this bride of mine;
If I own a woman known to you
Or have a child here in this hall.

35. "Go to the smithy that you yourself made,
You will find the bellows bespattered with blood;
The boys' heads I there severed
And laid their bodies beneath the water.

36. "The white skulls hidden beneath the hair
I surfaced with silver and sent to Nidud;
The jeweled eyes from their sockets
I sent to Nidud's cunning queen.

37. "But from the two lads' teeth I fashioned
Pendant gems and sent to Bodvild;
Now goes Bodvild heavy with child,
The only daughter of both of you."

38. NIDUD: "No words could grieve me more than yours,
Nor could I wish you aught worse, Volund.
So high is no man he could unhorse you,
None is so skilled he could shoot you down,
Where you fly in the heavens."

39. Smiling Volund rose in the air,
Sorrowful Nidud stayed where he sat.

40. NIDUD: "Rise up, Tackrad, best of thralls,
Bid Bodvild, the bright-browed,
Go to her father,
To speak with him.

41. "Is it true, Bodvild, what he has said,
That you and Volund met on the island?"

42. BODVILD: "It is true what he told you, Nidud,
That I was with Volund
Together on the island,
For one brief moment of guilt.
I could not withstand him.
I could not resist him."

Chapter 22

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FOOTNOTES:

1. Sanskrit vimana, "celestial car" mentioned in Rig-Veda, Atharva-veda, and the Mahabharata. Has also been translated "chariot of the gods." (return to text)

2. Allknowing, science. (return to text)
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The Masks of Odin — Elsa-Brita Titchenell
Chapter 22
Lokasenna
(Loki's Flyting (1))

TEXT

TRANSLATOR'S NOTES

The Aesir and Asynjor (deities) were assembled in the inviolable, spacious hall, lighted by bright gold, to feast on the ale brewed in Hymer's caldron by Ager. Thor was absent "in easterly ways" and Loki had not been invited. At this point in evolution, when ale was already brewed, Loki, the human mind, had become proud and selfish, intractable to the promptings of the spiritual soul, and therefore he had no place in the banquet hall of the gods. Elves, however, were present: the finest properties of human souls, which had united their essence, their asmegir (godmaker), with the divine Self, and who therefore could enter the sacred precincts.

Loki slew Fimafeng (the nimblefingered), forced his way into the hall and demanded to share in the revels. He reminded Odin of their kinship, calling himself Loft (lofty — aspiring human intelligence). At Odin's command Vidar then ceded his place to Loki and served him ale but, before drinking, Loki toasted all the gods, pointedly omitting Brage (intuition, bardic inspiration). He accused that noble virtue (Brage) of cowardice and,

when Brage offered him bangles of gold (such as were used for money) and even his horse and sword to keep the peace of the sacred place, Loki still refused to be silenced. Idun rose to defend Brage, whereupon she too became the butt of Loki's ready tongue, and soon each Ase and Asynja, rising to the defense of another (never of himself), received the renegade's insults. At length Frigga intervened. She tried to soothe the angry company, enjoining the gods to forget the follies of their youth and cease upbraiding each other with long forgotten peccadilloes, whereupon Loki turned on her too, accusing the mother of the gods of infidelity. This brought a sharp retort from Freya who reminded Loki that "Frigg knows every being's fate though she herself says naught." Arriving on the scene, Thor too indulged in an altercation with Loki who, when threatened with Mjøltnir, the pulverizer, finally ceased and left.

At first reading, the feast of the deities seems a pointless succession of insults but, on closer scrutiny, it illustrates how a materialistic and uninspired intellect looks at nature, and particularly how such a pragmatic mind regards the powers represented as gods in mythic stories. Loki's vituperations read like the language of a Billingsgate fishwife. He sees in the actions of universal powers only the reflection of his own limited and distorted perceptions. Regarded in this way the metaphor becomes quite transparent. In fact, Loki's accusations of infidelity and immorality are exactly duplicated in numerous books of mythology today, where adultery and incest among the deities are taken literally and at face value. But when the gods and goddesses are, more logically, regarded as overlapping, enhancing, or mitigating force fields which interact with one another physically — gravitationally and in other ways throughout the electromagnetic spectrum — their combined effects may well accord with what the mythic tales relate. When, in addition, their various spheres of influence are taken to include spiritual and divine interactions, their meaning enters a realm of sacred science.

The mind is dual. Born of giant forebears, Loki is also one of the Aesir and their constant companion, aide, and interpreter when they travel in the giant worlds. His pranks are, on the surface, a rich source of amusement but, as we seek to understand his place in the evolution of beings, we soon see the pitfalls into which Loki alone, uninspired by Brage, can lead us. Allied with poetic inspiration (Brage), the lower practical mind (Loki) becomes lofty (Lopt), the salvation of humanity, and provides the mead for the inner god. When alone, it alienates itself from the heart of Being; unheeding of intuition, it rails against the gods, against universal law, against justice, love, and compassion. Our own civilization illustrates this for, although most human beings are well disposed and inclined to compassionate action, often cleverness is prized above virtue and physical skills above wisdom. If the gentler qualities were entirely lacking our world would truly be a hell, for technology untempered with ethics leads to disaster (which literally means it divorces us from the stars). Human progress is best promoted not by mind alone but by an alliance of mind and heart.

As the Aesir at their revels partake of the garnered spiritual gains of the life just past, the elves rest among them. These are souls that have earned their association with the divinities, leaving "outside" that part of mind — Loki — which seeks its own and separate goals. But the sleeping elves are not yet conscious in the sphere of the gods

and can take no active part in the festivities; their awareness is not adequate to enjoy those realms. They are the souls' increment of good, dreaming their heavenly dreams in the higher halls of Hel, while awaiting the urge to enter once more into incarnation as men and women.

There is also another explanation for the sleeping elves. In the sacred traditions each of nature's kingdoms in turn has its heyday in any one world; the other streams of life belonging to that world are then relatively inactive. Our earth, as we observe, is presently concentrating its life forces in the human sphere. The mineral and vegetable representatives, though present, are for the most part quiescent. It is said that when the mineral kingdom is active, volcanism is tremendously prevalent and, when the vegetation is most flourishing, plants are not gently rooted but move freely over the earth. When the next succeeding wave of life following the human comes to our planet, ours will "sleep" among the lowest kingdom of the gods who will then be the predominant evolvers of the globe, "quaffing the ale" of life.

Lokasenna

Ager, also named Gymer, had prepared a drinking bout for the Aesir, after receiving the great caldron, as has been told. (2) To this banquet came Odin and Frigg, his wife. Thor did not, as he was in easterly ways but Sif, his wife, was there. Also Brage and his wife Idun. Tyr also; he was one-handed, for the Fenris wolf had torn off his hand while being bound. There was Njord, and his wife Skade, Frey and Freya, and Vidar, Odin's son. Loki was there, as also Frey's servants, Byggver and Beyla. There was a host of Aesir and elves.

Ager had two servants, Fimafeng (3) and Elder. Bright gold supplied the light instead of fire, the ale served itself, and the place was inviolable and spacious.

Those present praised the excellence of Ager's servants; Loki could not bear this, so he slew Fimafeng, whereupon the Aesir shook their shields, shouted at Loki, and drove him into the forest while they went to drink. Loki returned and met Elder outside. He said:

LOKI: Tell me, Elder, before you take another step: At the ale feast, whereof speak the sons of the triumphant gods?

ELDER: They judge of their weapons and their battle honor, the sons of the triumphant gods. Of Aesir and elves in there none has a good word for you.

LOKI: I shall go into Ager's hall and see this drinking feast. I shall bring scorn and anger to the Aesir's sons and so blend evil in the mead.

ELDER: Know that if you go into Ager's hall to see this drinking feast and heap scorn and abuse on the gentle gods, they may wipe it off on you.

LOKI: And you know, Elder, if we two have it out with words together that I am far better armed with speech than you.

Then entered Loki into the hall. At his entrance all fell silent.

LOKI: Thirsty came Loft into this hall from far away to beg the Aesir, that one of them might give me a sip of fine mead. Why are you silent, gloomy gods? Have you nothing to say? Either show me a seat or forcibly drive me away.

BRAGE: A seat at the festive board shall you never have from the Aesir because they well know what kind of person they choose to carouse with.

LOKI: Remember, Odin, how in the foretime we two mingled blood together; you then said you never would drink ale were it not served us both.

ODIN: Rise, Vidar, and let the wolf's father have a seat in the assembly, that Loki may not charge us with scorn here in Ager's hall.

Vidar rose and poured for Loki. Before he drank, Loki addressed the Aesir:

LOKI: Hail ye, Aesir, hail Asynjor, hail all holy gods, excepting him who sits inmost on the bench — Brage!

BRAGE: My horse and sword I give you freely, also a ring I forfeit to you, that you pay not the Aesir with envy and make the gods angry.

LOKI: May you ever be robbed of horse and bangle, Brage! Of all Aesir and elves here you are the most craven.

BRAGE: Were I outside instead of inside Ager's hall I should bear your head in my hand. It would serve your lie right.

LOKI: You are brave when seated, Brage, bench ornament! Go and fight if you want to. A brave man hesitates not.

IDUN: I beg of you, Brage, by your children and your wished-for sons, tease not Loki reproachfully here in Ager's hall.

LOKI: Shut up, Idun. You of all women I think are the most man-crazy since your dazzling arms clasped your brother's bane.

IDUN: I will not tease Loki with accusations here in Ager's hall. I would rather appease Brage who is wrought up; I do not want you two angered to fight.

GEFION (4): Why should you, two Aesir, use sharp words between you? Loft knows not how he is joking and tempting the gods.

LOKI: Shut up, Gefion, let us not forget how you were seduced by the white youth who

gave you the gem and whom you linked in your limbs.

ODIN: You are mad, Loki, out of your mind, angering Gefion, for she knows all the fates of the ages as well as I do.

LOKI: Shut up, Odin; you never did know how to choose justly among warriors; often you gave victory to those you should not, the very worst.

ODIN: And if I gave victory to the worst whom I should not, you spent eight winters in the underworld, a milker of cows, a woman, and there you bore children, offspring of evil. This I call cause to name you wretch.

LOKI: You are said on earth to have used seery, to have cheated in sibyl's wisdom, and walked the world in a sorcerer's guise.

FRIGG: You should not talk of your doings in adolescent years, what you two Aesir practiced in the foretime. Folks forget old grudges.

LOKI: Quiet, Frigg, you are Fjorgyn's maid and have ever sought dalliance, as when you, Vidrer's woman, clasped both Vile and Vi to your bosom.

FRIGG: Had I a son such as Balder here in Ager's hall you would not escape the sons of the Aesir without being badly beaten.

LOKI: Well, Frigg, will you that I tell more of my harmful runes? I shall work it so that you shall not again see Balder riding to the halls.

FREYA: You are mad, Loki, ranting your evil doings; Frigg, I know, knows every being's fate, though she herself says naught.

LOKI: Shut up, Freya, I know you well. You lack not faults: of the Aesir and elves who are here within, you have whored with them all.

FREYA: Your tongue is false and I believe it will babble you evil and ills in the future. You have angered the Aesir and Asynjor. In shame shall you wend your way home.

LOKI: Shut up, Freya, you are a witch full of evil; when the mild gods found you conjuring with your brother, ugly you snorted then.

NJORD: It matters little if the woman embrace a husband or lover, but it is a miracle that the Aesir's hermaphrodite could enter here, as he bore offspring. (5)

LOKI: Shut up, Njord. When eastward hence you were sent as hostage of the gods, Hymer's maids used you for a jar and poured in your mouth.

NJORD: I have the consolation that when I was eastward sent as hostage of the gods, I

begot a son whom no one hates, a doughty defender of the Aesir. (6)

LOKI: Stay, Njord, hold your tongue; no longer shall this be hid: with your sister you begot such a son. It was to be expected.

TYR: Frey is the best of all the bold Aesir: no man's wife or maid laments on his account. He loosens all links.

LOKI: Shut up, Tyr, you never made peace between any two; let us speak of your right hand. Fenrer tore it from you.

TYR: I lost my hand, and you your star witness. The harm is ill for us both. The wolf is no better off, biding in fetters till the end of the ages.

LOKI: Shut up, Tyr. With your wife it happened that she bore a son by me; you never received an ell nor a penny for the dishonor, poor fool.

FREY: I see the wolf lying at the river's mouth till the rulers' reign shall be rent. Beside him shall you also be chained if you cease not now, schemer.

LOKI: With gold you bought Gymer's daughter, and so sold your sword; but when Muspell's sons ride over the Mirkwood, how shall you then fight?

BYGGVER: Had I the noble birth of Ingunar-Frey and such a blissful abode, I should grind you finer than marrow, you bird of ill omen, and lame all your limbs.

LOKI: What toddler is this I see sneaking his fare, a sniffer of crumbs? You tattle in Frey's ear and tread the mill.

BYGGVER: Byggver is my name, and I am called smart among gods and men; I am privileged to drink good ale here with all Ropt's sons.

LOKI: Shut up, Byggver, you never could share fairly the food among men; and you were hidden beneath the bench-hay when men came to blows.

HEIMDAL: You are drunk, Loki, and robbed of your wits; why don't you cease, Loki? Overindulgence causes both young and old to lose control of their tongues.

LOKI: Shut up, Heimdal. In the morning of days you were ill-fated to be ever splashed on the back, watcher for the gods.

SKADE: You are funny, Loki, but not for long may you play with a wagging tail; for, tied with your cold son's guts on a sharp rock shall the angry gods bind you.

LOKI: If on a sharp rock the angry gods bind me with my frostcold son's guts, I was both first and last in the battle when Tjasse (7) lost his life.

SKADE: If first and last you were in the tumult when Tjasse gave his life, then from my sanctuaries, my sacred groves, shall you meager counsel gain.

LOKI: Gentler were your words to the son of Lofu when you bade me to your bed; such things must be told if we are to narrate all our faults.

Beyla/Sif came forth and poured the tankard with mead for Loki:

SIF: Hail thee, Loki, take this cup filled with mellow mead, and may I alone of Aesir's children be held free from faults.

Loki took the horn and drank.

LOKI: Alone indeed were you, if you were so faithful and attentive to your spouse, but I know one who has lain in Lorrider's bed, and that is sly Loki.

BEYLA: The mountains quake; I believe Lorrider is on his way here from home: he will silence the traducer whether god or man.

LOKI: Shut up, Beyla, you are Byggver's woman, full of evil, a more insolent nuisance came not among the Aesir's children, you dirty dairymaid.

Thor entered and spoke:

THOR: Quiet, miserable wretch, I shall rob you of speech with Mjolnir, my fire-hammer; I shall strike your head from your neck, thus shall you lose your life.

LOKI: Now is come the son of Earth. Why so noisy, Thor? You dare not brag of battling the wolf who swallows Victory-father whole.

THOR: Quiet, miserable wretch, my force-hammer Mjolnir shall rob you of speech. I shall hurl you aloft in the eastern space that none may see you again.

LOKI: Of your eastern journeys you never should speak before men since you crouched in the thumb of the giant's mitt, warrior. (8) You seemed unlike Thor then.

THOR: Quiet, miserable wretch, my force-hammer Mjolnir shall rob you of speech; with this my right hand I shall slay you with Rungner's bane, that all your bones break.

LOKI: I mean to live yet a long, long age, though you threaten me with the hammer; dreadfully tight did Skrymir's knots seem to you; though hale and strong you went hungry.

THOR: Quiet, miserable wretch, my force-hammer Mjolnir shall rob you of speech; Rungner's bane shall bring you to Hel, below the gates of death.

LOKI: I sang for the Aesir and for Aesir's sons whatsoever I chose, but only for you do I leave hence, for I know that Thor will strike at last. Ale you brewed, Ager, but never more shall you make feast again; may all that you here have with you be burned over and fire burn your back.

After this, Loki went in the shape of a salmon into the Frananger stream, where the Aesir caught him. He was bound with the guts of his son Nare. Narfi his [other] son became a wolf. Skade suspended a poisonous viper above Loki. The venom drips from it. Sigyn, Loki's wife, sits holding a bowl under the venom and when she goes to empty the bowl, the venom drips on Loki. He writhes in pain so that the earth shakes. These are called earthquakes.

Chapter 23

Contents

FOOTNOTES:

1. "Dispute in verse form" (Webster's Dictionary). (return to text)
 2. The Lay of Hymer. (return to text)
 3. The deft. (return to text)
 4. Gefion is a lunar aspect of Freya. (return to text)
 5. In a past age Loki imbodyed as a mare and with the stallion Svadilfare (svadil a slippery place + fara travel, hence disaster) gave birth to Sleipnir (slider), Odin's eight-legged steed. (return to text)
 6. Frey. (return to text)
 7. Skade's father. (return to text)
 8. Cf. Thor and Loki in Jotunheim. (return to text)
- Theosophical University Press Online Edition

The Masks of Odin — Elsa-Brita Titchenell
Chapter 23
Allvismal
(The Lay of Allwise)

TEXT

TRANSLATOR'S NOTES

Allvis (allwise or allknowing) is a dwarf who desires to wed the daughter of Thor. Doubting that the dwarf is worthy of this union, Thor nevertheless gives him an opportunity to prove himself and subjects him to an intensive examination concerning the attitudes and vision that characterize different grades of beings which compose the world. Allvis gives satisfactory replies to all questions, but Thor keeps him talking till daybreak when the first rays of the rising sun strike him, and he turns to stone or, in some versions, blends with the mountain from which he had emerged.

Many fairy tales have this surprise ending, where a dwarf or troll turns to stone when faced with the dawn of day. Several possible interpretations present themselves. One is that the forces belonging to the night side of nature, having no business with the concerns of the day, cease from activity when light returns. Allvis, however, conveys something more than this. He is a knowledgeable dwarf, who presumes to demand union with the daughter of the god who is sustainer of life: as a human nature, he is well informed but unenlightened; he is seeking immortality on the strength of his considerable knowledge, but his "dwarf" nature is still immature and, unless inspired and receptive to the solar radiance, it cannot gain the desired union with divinity. When the neophyte faces the solar essence, the dwarf element, unfit to blend with it, "turns to stone."

Many mythologies, including the biblical, use stone or rock to symbolize dogmatic, dead-letter religion. This is exemplified by Moses drawing living water from the rock — explaining the teachings within the ritual; and later, Christianity reverted to the "rock" (petra or Peter) as the foundation of the church.

This lay is probably susceptible also of other, equally valid interpretations; it is very revealing of different viewpoints that characterize consciousnesses at various stages of awareness and comprehension — from the simple matter-standpoint of the giants, through the differing perceptions of the dwarfs and of the elves, to the overview of nature commanded by the gods.

Allvismal

1. ALLWISE: The benches are being adorned.
Now a bride shall go to her home
With great haste it seems.
No rest is awaiting at home.

2. THOR: What dastard is this? Why so pale in the face?
Did you sleep with the dead last night?
Meseems there is something thurselike about you.
You are not born for a bride.

3. ALLWISE: Allwise is my name. I live below ground
And my city lies beneath stone.
The wagon-warrior (1) I come to seek.

Let no one break his word!

4. THOR: I break it though, for I, as her father,
Have the best right to decide.
I was not home when she was promised.
I alone among gods am marriage-maker.

5. ALLWISE: Who is this fellow who says he rules
Over the fair and blessed woman?
By your bowshots far there are few who know you.
Who has borne you to golden rings?

6. THOR: Wingthor am I. I have traveled widely
And I am the son of Broadbeard. (2)
Not against my will shall you have the maiden
Or receive her troth.

7. ALLWISE: Soon shall I have your promise, though,
And receive that troth.
I would rather have than forgo
The snowwhite maiden.

8. THOR: Nor shall her love be denied to you,
Wise guest, if from every world
You can give me tidings of all
That I wish to know.

9. ALLWISE: Try me, Wingthor, in all you would ask,
See what the dwarf is good for!
I have traveled in all the nine worlds
And have learned something of all. (3)

10. THOR: Tell me, Allwise, for you must know
The fates of all the kingdoms:
What is that earth disposed for the sons
Of ages in every world?

11. ALLWISE: Men call it Earth, but the Aesir (4) Humus;
The Vans call it Ways.
Giants say Evergreen, elves name it Growth;
The aspiring name it Origin.

12. THOR: Tell me, Allwise, as you must know
The fates of all kingdoms:
What is the heaven, the lofty-domed,
Named in each world?

13. ALLWISE: Men call it heaven, the gods say defense,
Windmaker is he to Vaner;
The giants say upper home, elves say fair-roof,
The dripping hall is it to dwarfs.

14. THOR: Tell me then, Allwise, as you must know
The fates of all kingdoms:
What is the moon that people see
In every world?

15. ALLWISE: It is moon to men but to gods the diminisher,
Turning wheel in the house of Hel;
Giants say hastener, dwarfs call it shine;
Elves name it tally of time.

16. THOR: Tell me then, Allwise, as you must know
The fates of all kingdoms:
What is the sun that people see
In every world?

17. ALLWISE: Men call it sun but gods say the southernmost,
Dwarfs call it Dvalin's toy;
Giants say ever-glowing, elves call it fairwheel,
All transparent is it to Aesir's sons.

18. THOR: Tell me then, Allwise, as you must know
The fates of all kingdoms:
What are the clouds that drench with rain
Named in each world?

19. ALLWISE: Men call them clouds, the gods shower-wont,
The Vans say wind river;
Giants say weatherbode, elves tempest-boder,
Hel's folk say the hiding helmet.

20. THOR: Tell me then, Allwise, as you must know
The fates of all kingdoms:
What is the wind that fares so far
In every world?

21. ALLWISE: He is wind to men, but wafter to gods,
Neigher to the highest gods (Vaner),
Howler to giants, din-maker to elves,
Whirler in the house of Hel.

22. THOR: Tell me then, Allwise, as you must know
The fates of all kingdoms:
What is that calm that shall one day come
And settle on every world?

23. ALLWISE: To men it is calm, to gods the law,
Vaner say end-of-wind;
Giants say stifling, elves a day's sleep,
Dwarfs call it end-of-being.

24. THOR: Tell me then, Allwise, as you must know
The fates of all kingdoms:
What is that sea whereon one rows
In every world?

25. ALLWISE: It is sea to men, the funnel's eye to gods,
Waves to the wise Vaner:
Eelhome to giants, to elves staff-of-law,
To dwarfs the deep sea.

26. THOR: Tell me then, Allwise, as you must know
The fates of all kingdoms:
What is the name of fire that burns for all
In every world?

27. ALLWISE: To men it is fire, to Aesir the spark that lights,
Wagon to Vaner;
Giants say gluttonous, burning to dwarfs,
The swift in Hel's house.

28. THOR: Tell me then, Allwise, as you must know
The fates of all kingdoms:
What is that forest that, shading, grows
In every world?

29. ALLWISE: He is forest to men but earth-man to gods,
To Hel he is barrow-kelp,
Fuel to giants, to elves flower-twigs,
Vaner say willow-wand.

30. THOR: Tell me then, Allwise, as you must know
The fates of all kingdoms:
What is the night, daughter of dark,
Named in each world?

31. ALLWISE: Men call her night, the gods say dark,

The highest gods say the disguiser;
Giants say unlight, elves joy-of-sleep,
Dwarfs call her dream-binder.

32. THOR: Tell me then, Allwise, as you must know
The fates of all kingdoms:
What is the harvest sown by the sons of the ages
In every world?

33. ALLWISE: Men call it grain, the gods yet-to-bear,
Vaner say growth;
Giants, food; elves the staff-of-law,
In Hel's house a heavy head.

34. THOR: Tell me then, Allwise, as you must know
The fates of all kingdoms:
What is that ale the sons of the aeons
Quaff in each world?

35. ALLWISE: To men it is ale, but with Aesir beer,
To Vaner a draught of power;
Pure law to giants, mead in Hel's house,
But festive drink to Suttung's sons.

36. THOR: In one man's breast I never saw so many staves of wisdom.
With subterfuge have I misled you;
Till daybreak, dwarf, you are still up.
Now shines the sun in the hall.

Chapter 24

Contents

FOOTNOTES:

1. Thor. (return to text)
 2. Odin. (return to text)
 3. This verse is missing in Codex Regius. (return to text)
 4. Codex Regius has elves. (return to text)
- Theosophical University Press Online Edition

Grogaldern and Fjolsvinns Ordskifte
(The Spells of Groa and Verywise's Exchange)

TEXT

TRANSLATOR'S NOTES
GROGALDERN

The two lays that follow belong together and it would be misleading to separate them. The first enumerates the necessary qualities that must have been acquired by a candidate for initiation, while the second relates the culminating test itself. Together they tell the story of Svipdag, and his "Appearing as Day."

Od (1) (man) is sent forth by his stepmother Skade on the supposedly impossible errand of finding and gaining admission to the hall of Menglad ("she who enjoys a jewel," a name for Freya, owner of the Brisingamen, humanity). Skade is the sister, wife, and also a daughter of Njord (time). It was she who suspended the venomous serpent over Loki's face when he was confined in the underworld.

To meet the all but insurmountable difficulties of his quest, Od invokes the aid of his dead mother, who is named Groa (growth). She rises from the dead to sing him nine protective charms. Represented as a sibyl, she symbolizes the hero's past, his former selves which have shaped his character and given him birth as he now is. If the lives of preparation have brought him the qualities he needs for success, he will be equipped for the great trial before him.

The "protective charms" are of course the strengths and virtues he has earned. First of these is freedom from all external pressures; the second is self-control; third, immunity from the powerful currents that flow towards the realms of death (of the soul); fourth is the power to turn enemies into friends, to transmute negative traits into positive, useful attributes; fifth is the magic sword which will loosen all bonds, all limiting weaknesses which by now the hero must have overcome. They are the personal ties that attract the soul away from its high purpose. Sixth, she endows him with the aid of the natural elements, even those of that "sea, more dread than men may know" (11) — the astral light with its baleful illusions; seventh, he gains immunity from the "frost of the high mountain" (12) — the chilling fear that grips the soul when faced with the unfamiliar heights of purer worlds. Eighth is the power to pass unharmed among the shades of the dead.

From all this a theosophic interpretation shows clearly that the adventure on which Od has embarked is an initiation into a high estate of spiritual awareness. Such initiation demands first a descent into the regions beneath our physical world. Each great Teacher of mankind has to "descend into hell" to render aid to lower grades of beings and to feel and understand their condition, while proving his integrity and remaining unaffected by the noxious miasmas of these worlds.

Ninth, the sibyl enjoins: "If you exchange words with the spear-renowned giant, of words and man-sense of tongue as of heart, may you have enough!" (14)

The nine charms also denote qualities that have been, or should have been, developed by each human being who has traversed the nine worlds we have experienced in this cycle. Certain it is that they are necessary equipment for any soul to become truly enlightened.

FJOLSVINN'S EXCHANGE

We find Od in this lay seeking admittance to the hall of Menglad, whose name we know as a kenning for Freya. The guardian at the gate to Menglad's hall calls himself Fjolsvinn (Verywise) and is none other than Odin, here standing for the man's inner god and hierophants. He rebuffs the traveler, calling him "giant" and "wolf," but Od insists on gaining access to the gilded hall. Asked his name he responds:

"Windcold is my name, Springcold was my father. His sire was Vercold" (6).

Od then asks whose hall this is and learns that it is indeed that of Menglad, "born of her mother and the son of the Sleep-enchancer" (7).

Here is the origin of the tale of the Sleeping Beauty. In Sweden she is Tornrosa (thornrose), the rose pricked with the thorn of sleep: she is man's spiritual soul, the unawakened beauty who is the aim of life for man. The sleep-enchancer is in certain respects identified with Njord, as Time, and also with Springcold, a far-past age of innocence. The seeker and the sought are thus descended from the same divine source, as are the human soul and its inner god. It is the aim of the individual to gain reunion with the universal after fulfilling its self-awareness through evolution in all the realms of matter: with Menglad-Freya — the higher self of man, his spiritual intelligence — to become one with the divinity that is awaiting its human champion.

In the guise of Windcold, Od poses questions of the keeper at the gate, and Odin-Verywise responds: he gives the name and function of the gate that binds like a fetter any pilgrim who lifts the latch; and of the court made from the limbs of the mud giant — the substance from which were made the first forms of men which were rejected as unfit vehicles by the gods and which were superseded by a later creation. Its task is to repel all comers. The two fierce watchdogs, according to Verywise, have eleven watches yet to keep before this life term ends.

When Windcold asks the name of the tree whose branches spread over all the land he is told it is Mimameid, the Tree of Knowledge, "which falls not for fire or iron" (20), and whose fruit helps what is hidden within to be revealed. Not to be confused with the Tree of Life its name links it with the "wise giant" Mimer, owner of the well of the wisdom to be gained through existence in matter. In the biblical Genesis, too, the trees of life and knowledge are quite distinct. It is clear that the "fall" from innocence was an inevitable part of the evolutionary process. Man must leave the childlike condition and enter what the Edda terms the "victory worlds" in order to earn, consciously and self-consciously,

his ultimate access to the Tree of Life. Here the human soul or elf, Od, must by its own self-determined efforts attain the godlike state that enables it to unite with its hamingja (immortal essence). We shall see how thorough a familiarity with the 'Tree of Knowledge is needed for the human initiate to gain this union.

Windcold asks about the golden bird in the topmost branches of Mimameid and is told it is Wideopener. The hero must conquer him, but in order to do this he must enter the underworld and there obtain the magic potion brewed by Lopt (lofty: aspiration), the inspired aspect of Loki, mind guided by its hamingja. The brew was made from remorse in the lower hells and is kept in a tub of tough iron, secured by nine strong locks. He must wrest it from its keeper, the dreaded hag Sinmara who, like Ceridwen of the Welsh, guards the caldron. The brew, like the mystic soma-drink supposedly given to initiants in the East, aids in opening the consciousness to the fearsome hells of the soul. These the candidate must successfully traverse — "endless woes" concentrated by the Wideopener "in one great sorrow" (23).

But there is a paradox here: in order to obtain from Sinmara the magic potion which will make accessible the Wideopener in the topmost branches of the Tree of Knowledge, the hero must bring her a shining feather from that golden bird!

The candidate who seeks the wisdom of the gods must thus gain access to the spiritual heights in order to descend to the nethermost regions and return unscathed; only after his successful rise from the descent into hell may he claim his bride — attain union with the immortal essence of himself, the universal heart of his being, and achieve the vistas of unlimited consciousness — for this world or branch of the Tree of Life.

There is here a story within a story, as so often happens in myths. Od, who stands at the gateway leading to the final revelation, in his exchange with the guardian of the gate who is his initiator, guide, and examiner, receives information which is clearly intended for the listener, or reader: a description of the types of experience and enlightenment of mind and soul which must be undergone by one who aspires to enter the hall named Calm, "long poised on the point of a spear, whereof only hearsay reached the people of old" (31) — (when there were as yet none who could receive it?)

At length Windcold stands revealed as Svipdag, the radiant — "Appearing as Day." Now he names himself son of Sunbright, "tossed forth on windcold ways" (46). The Egyptian Mysteries refer to the risen initiate as a "son of the sun," for a radiance is visible about him. This is the long forgotten origin of the ushnisha or halo above or about the heads of Bodhisattvas, Christs, and saints in ancient and mediaeval art. Svipdag, the successful initiate, represents one of such rare perfected humans in the history of mankind. "Tossed on windcold ways" are we all, every monad, each spark of divine fire which emerged from IT at the beginning of time and descended into spheres of life; destined at the end of the cycle to become reunited with its divine parent, every monad of consciousness brings with it the increment of experience earned throughout its existence.

The end of this lay reveals the Edda as a transmission of the one universal theosophy which is expressed through the Buddhist, Christian, and other sacred traditions throughout history. The story of Svipdag points to the true goal of life — hastened in initiation — something which has been consistently overlooked by modern mythologers. It is the very crux of the hero's venture, his selfless progress, success, and the crowning reunion with his hamingja. When Menglad welcomes him as her beloved, saying she has long awaited him on the sacred mountain, he responds, "Both have we yearned; I have longed for you, and you to meet me. Atonement is now as we two together share the tasks of the years and the ages" (48).

These few words are among the most important in all mythologies extant: the hero united with his spiritual self — not triumphant in his glory or content to rest eternally in heavenly peace — undertakes to aid his higher self in performing henceforth "the tasks of the years and the ages." This final verse places the Norse myths among the noblest scriptures of the world, those which enjoin the divine sacrifice whereby the aspirant aims to serve mankind and gains universal peace only in order to renounce it for the benefit of all beings. This is the ideal of the schools of genuine occultism down through the ages and the motivation of all the world's saviors.

Grogaldern

1. SON [OD]: Waken, Groa, good woman. I call you at the doors of death.
Mind you not that you enjoined your son to come to the barrow-tomb?
2. MOTHER [GROA]: What fate has stricken my only son, to what ill is my child born,
That you call your mother from the dead, where she is gone from the world of men?
3. SON: An ill trick played me the sly woman who embraced my father;
She has sent me where none may go — to seek Menglad.
4. MOTHER: Long is the journey, far are the roads: far-reaching human passions;
If you succeed in your desire, Skuld (2) will also be content.
5. SON: Sing me spells that are good, help your son, Mother! On wide ways
Shall I helpless stray. I feel too young for the marriage.
6. MOTHER: First, I sing you the song of fortune that Rane sang to Rind:
Shake all ills from your shoulders and steer your own steps.
7. I sing you a second: As you wander on unwilling ways: Urd's (3) bolts
Hold you fast if you find abuse.
8. I sing you a third: If towering torrents threaten to engulf you,
They shall hasten to Hel and for you they shall lower their level.
9. I sing you a fourth: If enemies lurk, armed, on the roads of men,
That their minds may be turned toward you, their anger soothed to friendship.

10. I sing you a fifth: If fetters be laid on your limbs, a sword I sound over you
That shall spring the locks from your limbs and the fetters shall fall from your feet.

11. I sing you a sixth: If you be on a sea more dread than men may know,
The race of the wind and the roar of the waves shall aid you on your journey.

12. I sing you a seventh: If you freeze from frost on the lofty mountain,
The chill of death shall spare your flesh and your limbs keep their life.

13. I sing you an eighth: If on cloudy paths overtaken by night,
No harm may befall you from the shade of a Christian woman.

14. I sing you a ninth: If you exchange words with the spear-renowned giant,
Of words and man-sense of tongue as of heart, may you have enough!

15. Travel no roads where evil you sense. No obstacle hinders you then.
On the earth-fast rock I stood within the door chanting these spells for you.

16. Take your mother's words, son; take them hence. Let them ever live in your heart.
All that is good shall you ever reap, as long as you heed my words.
Fjolsvinns Ordskifte

1. Outside the court he saw rising upward a giant toward the fort:
"Who is that wretch standing before the court and turning himself about at the purifying
flames?
"Whom do you seek, whose trail do you follow? What seek you to know, friendless one?
"Wander away once more on wet ways. You have no champion here, defenseless one."

2. WANDERER: Who is the wretch who stands at the gate and bids not the wanderer
welcome?
Discourteous discourse you dispense. Hie you hence homeward!

3. THE WATCHMAN: Verywise is my name. I am knowing enough but waste not much
food.
Into this house you shall never come. Wend your ways, wolf!

4. WANDERER: None turns away from his eyes' delight, when he sees some sweet
sight.
The courts seem to gleam round the gilded hall. Here may I happy dwell.

5. VERYWISE: Tell me of what past you are born, of what forebears you are the scion.

6. WANDERER: Windcold is my name, Springcold was my father. His sire was
Vercold.
Tell me, Verywise; I must ask and wish to know:

Who rules here and wields the power over lands and sumptuous halls?

7. VERYWISE: Menglad is her name, born of her mother and the son of the Sleep-enchancer.

She rules here and wields the power over lands and sumptuous halls.

8. WINDCOLD: Tell me, Verywise; I must ask and wish to know:
What is that gate than which even the gods have not one more deceptive?

9. VERYWISE: Noisy her name and she was created by the three sons of Sunblind.
Like a fetter she fastens each wayfarer fast who unlocks her and opens her up.

10. WINDCOLD: Tell me, Verywise; I must ask and wish to know:
What is that court than which even the gods have not one more perilous?

11. VERYWISE: Repeller of strangers is his name. I made him of the mud giant's limbs;
So have I made him that he shall stand as long as men live.

12. WINDCOLD: Tell me, Verywise; I must ask and wish to know:
What are these hounds than which I never saw any more vicious?

13. VERYWISE: One is named Gifr, the other Gere, if you must know.
Eleven watches they have to stand ere the Rulers' reign be rent.

14. WINDCOLD: Tell me, Verywise; I must ask and wish to know:
May any man enter while such beasts slumber?

15. VERYWISE: They have been charged with alternately sleeping since they were
trained to watch.
One sleeps by night, the other by day. No one enters here.

16. WINDCOLD: Tell me, Verywise; I must ask and wish to know:
Is there any food one could give them and enter while they eat?

17. VERYWISE: Two steaks there lie in Wideopener's members, if you must know.
That is the only food a man might give them and enter while they eat.

18. WINDCOLD: Tell me, Verywise; I must ask and wish to know:
What family tree spreads here its branches over the land?

19. VERYWISE: Mimameid is the tree and no man knows of what roots it is grown;
What evil may fell it but few may guess. It falls not for fire or iron.

20. WINDCOLD: Tell me, Verywise; I must ask and wish to know:
What will cause to languish the glorious tree that falls not for fire or iron?

21. VERYWISE: When its fruit shall be burned on the fire by doting crones, then will go out
What should be within. Then is the tree rotten among men.

22. WINDCOLD: Tell me, Verywise; I must ask and wish to know:
What is that rooster high in the tree, all of him shining of gold?

23. VERYWISE: Wideopener is his name who, shining, perches high in Mimameid's crown.
He amasses in one great sorrow the endless woe from Sinmara's fire.

24. WINDCOLD: Tell me, Verywise; I must ask and wish to know:
Is there a weapon whereby Wideopener may be brought to the house of Hel?

25. VERYWISE: Lavaten is its name. It was made with remorse by Lopt 'neath the chasm's gate.
In the iron vat in Sinmara's keeping, it is guarded by nine firm locks.

26. WINDCOLD: Tell me, Verywise; I must ask and wish to know:
Comes he again who seeks to take that magic lever?

27. VERYWISE: He may come again who seeks to take that magic lever,
If he bear that which few may own to the fruitful earth's healing-woman.

28. WINDCOLD: Tell me, Verywise; I must ask and wish to know:
Is there anything costly a man might own to delight the hag?

29. VERYWISE: The shining pinion on its quill from Wide-opener's wings shall you bear
As a gift to Sinmara ere she deigns give you the weapon.

30. WINDCOLD: Tell me, Verywise; I must ask and wish to know:
What is that hall which is girt about, wisely, by purging fires?

31. VERYWISE: Calm is his name, and long may he poise on the point of a spear.
About that glorious house only hearsay has reached to the people of old.

32. WINDCOLD: Tell me, Verywise; I must ask and wish to know:
Who of the sons of the gods built the hall I saw through the gates?

33. VERYWISE: Une and Ire, Bare and Ore, Varr and Vagdrasil, Dore, Ure, and Delling;
also the sly elf Loki.

34. WINDCOLD: Tell me, Verywise; I must ask and wish to know:
What is that mountain where the bride is to be found ensconced in dreams?

35. VERYWISE: Sacred Mountain its name, a haven since of old for the sick and

wounded;

Though sick unto death, each woman who ascends here shall be healed.

36. WINDCOLD: Tell me, Verywise; I must ask and wish to know:
Who are the maids who sit at Menglad's knees, in harmony together?

37. VERYWISE: Haven is one, Survivor another, a third Custodian; Bright and Gentle,
Tender and Peace, Compassion, and Commander of Clemency. (4)

38. WINDCOLD: Tell me, Verywise; I must ask and wish to know:
Do they save those who sacrifice to them, if they deem it needful?

39. VERYWISE: They wisely save those who sacrifice in a holy place.
So harsh an evil comes not to man that he be not delivered therefrom.

40. WINDCOLD: Tell me, Verywise; I must ask and wish to know:
Is there a man who may sleep on the lovable Menglad's arm?

41. VERYWISE: No man is there who may sleep on the lovable Menglad's arm,
Only Svipdag; to him the sunbright maid is trothplight for spouse.

42. WINDCOLD: Open wide the gates! Here you see Svipdag!
It is still unknown whether Menglad will deign to take me for her joy.

43. VERYWISE TO MENGLAD: Hear, Menglad. A man is come. Go see the guest
yourself
The hounds are content; the house has opened of itself. Meseems it is Svipdag.

44. MENGLAD: If you are lying when you say the man has come from afar to my halls,
Vicious ravens shall tear out your eyes on the high gallows.

45. MENGLAD TO SVIPDAG: Whence have you come? Why did you undertake the
journey?

By what name are you known in your own house?

By your kin and your name I shall know by portent if I were meant for your wife.

46. SVIPDAG: Misty Morn is my name. Sunbright is my father. Thence I was tossed
forth

On windcold ways. None may lament Urd's decree though the cause be weak.

47. MENGLAD: Be you welcome! What I have wished for I now have; a kiss greet the
dear arrival.

Long have I awaited you on the mountain of sleep. Now my hope is fulfilled.

You have once more returned, man, to my halls.

48. SVIPDAG: Both have we yearned; I have longed for you, and you to meet me.

Atonement is now, as we two together share the tasks of the years and the ages.

Chapter 25

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FOOTNOTES:

1. Od is derived from Odr, spiritual mind, and stands for the evolved man. Similarly, the English word man is derived from the Sanskrit manas, which also means the higher intelligence, from man, to reflect upon, to think. (return to text)

2. Future. (return to text)

3. Past. (return to text)

4. Lif, Lifthrasir, Tjodvarta, Bjart, Blid, Blod, Frid, Eir, and Orboda. (return to text)
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The Masks of Odin — Elsa-Brita Titchenell

Chapter 25

Skirnismal

(The Lay of Skirner)

TEXT

TRANSLATOR'S NOTES

Frey, the deity whose embodiment is in the many-mansioned earth, was seated on Lidskjalf whence he espied the giant maiden Gerd in her father's court. He was consumed with love for her and wished to woo her for his bride. The divine being cannot, however, enter the matter worlds directly and therefore Frey sent his henchman Skirner to woo the maiden on his behalf. Skirner introduces himself to Gerd as "not of the elves, nor of Asa-sons, nor yet am I one of the wise Vaner" (18). What, then, is he?

Skirner means Radiance, a ray of divinity, an avatara which descends into a lower world in order to enlighten a race of humanity — a giant maid. Equipped with the steed and sword of the god, Skirner rides to the giant world and gains speech with Gerd, but she repels all his overtures. The apples of immortality do not tempt her, nor does "the ring that was burned with Odin's son" (Balder), which drops eight like itself every ninth night — her father, she says, has gold aplenty. Nor is she moved by threats of continuing evils in the giant world with worse to come. However, when her future is revealed to her — extinction in "powerlessness, witlessness, and lust" — she finally agrees to meet with the god in the inviolable sacred grove Barre "where one travels in peace" (39).

The lay of Skirner might easily be dismissed as fantastic nonsense were it not for a

certain suggestive quality that parallels other tales relating to the incarnation of a divinity in our world: an avataric descent. This, like the "hostages" sent by the Vaner to the Aesir, is the penetration of a divine ray from a superior sphere into a lower world and its embodiment there, to bring an ennobling influence to bear on the thought atmosphere of that world. At certain junctures earth has experienced such events, when a divine teacher has taken human form to teach and inspire humanity. Krishna, Lao-tse, Sankaracharya, the one whom tradition has named the Christ, and others, are examples of such avatars. They come at certain cyclic periods; in the words of Krishna, "I produce myself among creatures, O son of Bharata, whenever there is a decline of virtue and an insurrection of vice and injustice in the world; and thus I incarnate from age to age for the preservation of the just, the destruction of the wicked, and the establishment of righteousness." Each time such an avatara imbodyes among human beings, he strikes anew the keynote of truth which resounds for a longer or shorter epoch, depending on the age; eventually a new cycle begins, bringing a fresh dispensation of the eternal message.

In the light of this, Skirner's mission appears as such a periodic event, one which took place in some dimly remembered prehistoric time — a divine incarnation for the enlightenment of Gerd, daughter race of a grossly materialistic giant race, her father.

Before the descent, however, certain obstacles must be overcome. The radiant messenger must be equipped with the steed that can traverse the "purging fires" that surround the realm of the gods; he must be armed with Frey's sword which wields itself in battling giants "if the bearer is resourceful" (9). In the stories told of Frey, his sword is relatively short: a mere yard long. The one who wields it must be both courageous to approach close to the foe, and resourceful to be able to do so unharmed: the bearer of the weapon of spiritual will is fearless and also wise.

Gerd is evidently an age much like our own, one of material skills and pursuits: she is quite content with the riches of the giant world that are hers and cares not at all for those offered by the god's messenger. Only when the realization of the ceaseless sorrows attendant on a clinging to matter is gradually brought home to her does she choose at last to meet with her divine companion in the sacred grove of peace.

An interesting point raised by this poem revolves around the stepmother, Skade, whose name means "injury." She is the lovely young wife of Njord, the ageless Saturnian god of time. We have seen that she was the one who hung the venomous serpent over Loki's face to aggravate his suffering in the nether worlds; she is also the instigator of Skirner's errand to inquire of Frey what is troubling him. This is not an easy problem to resolve but it is one that bears consideration. Is it possible that Skade could represent the Norse equivalent of the highly mysterious Narada of eastern philosophies — the power which brings much immediate suffering but whose long-range effects are to clear the way for productive future growth? Whether she is intended to represent such an agent of natural calamity to further the evolution of beings must remain a moot question. Skirnismal

Frey, son of Njord, sat on the Shelf of Compassion one day and looked over all the worlds; he gazed into the realm of the giants and there saw a fair maiden walking from her father's hall to the women's quarters. Thence had he much heartache. Skirner was Frey's squire. Njord's wife Skade sent him to engage Frey in conversation.

1. SKADE: Stand forth, Skirner;
Go try to engage our son in speech;
Ask who it is
Who makes the wise one unhappy.

2. SKIRNER: I may expect angry words
If I ask your son
Whom he wishes to espouse.

3. Tell me, Frey, prince among gods:
Why sit you alone
In your infinite hall,
Day after day, my lord?

4. FREY: How can I reveal to you,
Friend of my youth,
My heart's great sorrow?
Though the sun shines
Blessingly each day,
It shines not on my desire.

5. SKIRNER: Surely your wish could not be so lofty
It might not be told to me;
We were young together in ancient days;
We two may trust each other!

6. FREY: In Gymer's courts I saw walking
A maid who pleases me;
Her arms glistened so they reflected
All the heavens and seas;

7. The maid is more dear to me
Than my childhood friend;
But of Aesir and elves
None wish to see us united.

8. SKIRNER: Bring me the horse that can bear me at dusk
Over the protective purging fires;
That sword as well that wields itself
In battle with giants.

9. FREY: I bring you the steed that can bear you at dusk
Over the protective purging fires;
The sword also that wields itself
If the bearer thereof is resourceful.

10. SKIRNER TO THE HORSE:
It is dark outside; our aim is to journey
Over moist mountains, close to the thurses;
We both shall be safe or both shall be taken
By the greedy giant.

Skirner rode into the giant world, to Gymer's courts; there angry hounds were bound by the gate of the yard surrounding Gerd's hall. He rode to a herdsman seated on a mound.

11. SKIRNER: Tell me, herdsman who sit on the mound
Watching all roads;
How shall I gain speech with the maiden
For Gymer's angry hounds?

12. HERDSMAN: Are you condemned to death or dead already,
You so high on your horse?
It will be hard for you to gain speech
With Gymer's maiden, the virtuous one.

13. SKIRNER: There are better things to do than haggle,
When wishing to advance.
One day only is my age waxed now,
And all my destiny laid forth.

14. GERD TO HER SLAVE GIRL: What is the noise,
The roaring din I hear?
The earth trembles
And Gymer's courts quake.

15. SLAVEGIRL: Here is a man, dismounted,
Letting his horse crop grass.

16. GERD: Bid him enter our hall
And drink splendid mead!
Yet I sense a foreboding
That outside stands my brother's bane.

17. Who among elves or of Asa-sons,
Or of wise Vaner are you?
Why came you alone over oak-lighted fires

To see our hall?

18. SKIRNER: I am not of the elves, nor of Asa-sons,
Nor yet am I one of wise Vaner;
Yet came I alone over oak-lighted fires
To see your hall.

19. Eleven golden apples I have
To give, Gerd, to you,
To buy your peace and that you
Be not indifferent to Frey.

20. GERD: Eleven apples I will not take
To have a man;
Frey and I may not build
Our lives together.

21. SKIRNER: Then I offer you the ring
That was burned with Odin's young son;
Eight like itself drop therefrom
Every ninth night.

22. GERD: I care not for the ring
Though it was burned with Odin's young son;
For gold I lack not
In Gymer's courts.

23. SKIRNER: See you this sword,
Supple, adorned with runes,
Which I hold in my hand?
I shall sever your head from your neck
If you refuse.

24. GERD: Force shall never cause me
To take a man;
But I know that if you and Gymer meet in battle,
It will be a lusty fight.

25. SKIRNER: See you the sword,
Supple, adorned with runes?
By it shall fall the ancient giant;
Your father were doomed to die.

26. I smite you with a magic wand,
For I must tame you to my wish;
You shall go where the children of men

Nevermore shall see you.

27. You shall sit on the eagle's mound
With your gaze turned from the world,
Staring toward Hel's house;
Food shall disgust you more
Than the shining serpent does men.

28. You shall be a monster on the road;
Rimner shall stare at you;
Your aspect confusing all;
Better shall you be known
Than the watcher of the gods,
As you greedily gawk at the gate.

29. Emptiness, lamentation, compulsion, impatience,
Your tears shall swell in anguish;
Sit while I conjure over you a flow of bitter curses,
Double lust and disgust.

30. You shall be hagridden from morning till night
In the giants' courts;
To the frost giants' hall shall you daily walk
Defenseless and lame,
Weeping shall be as joy to you,
And sorrow suffered with tears.

31. With a threeheaded thurse shall you walk,
Or be without man and mate;
Lust shall burn you, yearning tear you,
You shall be like the thistle that grows under the eaves.

32. I went to the woods,
To the damp willow thicket,
The wand to take.
The wand I took.

33. Wroth at you is Odin,
Wroth at you is Brage,
Frey shall heartily hate you;
Ill-willing maid,
You have provoked
The wrath of the gods in a matter of import.

34. Hear ye, titans,
Hear ye, frostgiants,

Sons of Suttung (fire),
And even you, Aesir:
Hear how I curse, how I ban the maid
From pleasuring with man.

35. Rimgrimner is the giant that shall hold you
Beneath the gates of death;
There shall slaves by the roots of trees
Give you sour liquid of goats;
No nobler drink shall you ever have, maid,
By your desire, by your own decree.

36. "Giant" I carve you three rune-staves:
Powerlessness, witlessness, and lust.
Then I tear off that on which I scribed it,
If need be.

37. GERD: Hail you, lad, rather now
Receive the festive beaker filled with aged mead!
Never dreamed I that I ever would wish
The Vana-son well.

38. SKIRNER: I would know all
Before I ride homeward:
When shall you at Ting
Plight your troth to the son of Njord?

39. GERD: Barre is the grove where one travels in peace,
As we both know.
Nine nights from now shall Gerd there plight her troth
To the son of Njord.

Skirner rode home. Frey stood outside, greeted him and asked for news.

40. FREY: Tell me, Skirner, before you unsaddle
The steed and take one step:
How went the matter in the giant world?
According to your way or mine?

41. SKIRNER: Barre is the grove where one travels in peace,
As we both know.
Nine nights from now shall Gerd there plight her troth
To the son of Njord.

42. FREY: Long is one night;
Longer two;

How shall I for three be yearning?
Often a month seems less to me.

Chapter 26

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The Masks of Odin — Elsa-Brita Titchenell

Chapter 26

Vagtamskvadet

(The Lay of Waywont)

TEXT

TRANSLATOR'S NOTES

This much-told story is well known in many versions. Balder, the sun-god, was beset by ominous dreams, which alarmed the Aesir. When Odin learned that the House of Hel, goddess of death, was being prepared to welcome his son, Odin's consort Frigga, mother of the gods, set out to exact an oath of all creatures that they would not harm Balder. All gladly gave her the assurance she craved, and it seemed the danger was averted. One thing only had been overlooked: the mistletoe, too slight and frail to pose a threat.

Loki learned of this oversight. He plucked the little plant, fashioned a dart from it and went to where the gods were amusing themselves hurling weapons against Balder, who stood laughing and invulnerable as the missiles rebounded and fell harmless to the ground. Only Balder's twin, the blind god Hoder, stood apart. Loki approached him and asked if he would not like to join the sport and he offered to guide Hoder's aim so that he too might enjoy the pastime. But the dart he placed on Hoder's bow was the fateful mistletoe. It pierced the sun-god's heart, and Balder forthwith journeyed to the House of Hel.

Disguised as Hermod (divine courage) Odin rode to entreat the queen of the dead to relinquish the sun-god, which she agreed to do if all beings without exception would weep for him. Frigga resumed her weary round and all creatures wept for the beloved Ase. When all appeared to be well she encountered an aged crone — Loki in disguise — who refused. It was decisive: Balder must remain in the House of Hel.

The sun-god was laid on his pyre ship; his loving wife Nanna (the moon) died of a broken heart and was laid beside him. Before the burning ship was set adrift, Odin is said to have bent and whispered something in his dead son's ear. (1)

There are many keys which fit this story: the sun-god dies each year at the winter solstice and is reborn, as his successor "but one night of age" strides to avenge his

death, whereupon a new year dawns with the returning sun. The festival of the "unconquered sun" was celebrated throughout the lands north of the equator at the sacred season which later became Christmas. It is the time of the "virgin birth" when the divine self is born within the successful aspirant initiated into the Mysteries. Christ's birth was given that date to identify him as one of these initiates.

Another interpretation refers the tale to the end of the solar or golden age. In the days of humanity's youth, innocence prevailed in the newly aroused mind of man. It was an age of peace and serenity, of instinctual obedience to nature's laws, when the influence of the gods governed the lives of creatures. As the budding human intelligence began to test its power, freedom of choice and will led to inevitable wrongs and the law of moral responsibility came into play; together with the forces of ignorance and darkness, represented by the blind god Hoder, they were instrumental in bringing to an end this gentle vegetating existence. Similarly, in the biblical tale, Adam and Eve were driven from Eden after tasting the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, because they had become as the gods (elohim), responsible for their evolution. The human mind must be free to choose its course; the automatic drifting of childlike innocence no longer became the human soul which must now begin to direct, purposefully and intelligently, its own progress toward perfection and manifest its divinity ever more fully.

The evolutionary urge of intelligence in action — Loki, disguised as the aged crone — refused to mourn the passing of that golden age, for the real work of man's inner growth must take its place. Bound in the underworld, Loki must suffer torment until the end of the cycle. Beautiful Skade, the adverse aspect of Njord, the Saturnian age, suspends a serpent over his face, and its venom drips unceasingly on the bound titan, compounding his agony, while his devoted wife Sigyn remains by his side, catching the poison in a goblet. It is when she must go to empty the cup that Loki writhes in agony and the earth quakes.

It is a sad reflection that in most, if not all, scriptures, the agent that forced man's ejection from the innocence of infancy into adulthood and responsibility, is regarded as evil. Perhaps it has been so regarded because, as a humanity, we have been reluctant to grow up. Even now, there are many who would prefer to lay their shortcomings at the door of some deity, real or fictitious, and who resent having any burden to bear, though a little observation and reflection must convince us that in order to fulfill a greater destiny evolving beings must leave childhood behind and undertake purposeful participation in the functions of the universe. Thus Loki is forced to abide in the depths of matter and to suffer until the cycle's culmination. His pain is enhanced by the venom produced by the serpent of knowledge, just as that of Prometheus is aggravated by the vulture gnawing at his liver. Both torments represent human misuse of the divine gift of mind. The enlightener's sacrifice will end only when the human travail shall have been successfully accomplished; when Fenris, Loki's offspring, shall be free and shall devour the sun at the end of its life, and Vale shall continue the sun-god's work on a grander level of existence. Then, maybe, we too shall know what Odin whispered in Balder's ear.

Vagtamskvadet (2)

1. All the Aesir, gods and goddesses
Sat in session together at Ting;
The mighty powers took council of this:
Why Balder was troubled by terrible dreams.

2. Mighty slight was the sun-god's slumber,
Rest and refreshment seemed gone from his sleep;
The giants requested prophetic response
As to how this might affect his creation.

3. The lots cast thereon showed that doomed to die
Was the dearest of Ull's kin; (3)
Anguish assailed Frigga and Svafner (4)
And the other rulers. They agreed on a plan:

4. Word was dispatched to all of creation,
Seeking assurance that Balder be spared;
All gave an oath that he would be unharmed.
Frigga received all agreements and promises.

5. Yet Allfather feared an uncertain outcome.
He felt that hamingjas were keeping away;
He summoned the Aesir, demanded decision.
Much was discussed at this congregation.

6. Up rose Odin, father of eons,
Saddled Sleipnir, his eightlegged steed;
Thence rode he downward, the road toward Niflhel,
Met here the hound that hails from the hollow.

7. Bloody the beast was on brisket and breast,
Long did he bay at the father of runes.
Odin rode forth; loud thundered the fields
As he halted at Hel's high hall.

8. Eastward rode Odin before the door,
Where he knew the sibyl's barrow to be.
Death-runes he sang to the magic maid
Until, forced to rise, she spoke from the dead.

9. "Who among men, unknown to me,
Compels my heavy journey?
I was covered with snow, lashed by rain,
Drenched with the dew. Long was I dead."

10. ODIN: Waywont my name, I am son of Deathwont,
Speak you from Hel's home as I speak from Life's:
For whom are the benches adorned with rings
And the couch covered over with gold?

11. SIBYL: The mead is made, for Balder brewed,
The precious draught sheltered by a shield;
The kin of the Aesir anxiously wait.
Forced have I said it. Now may I cease.

12. ODIN: Cease not, sibyl. I will inquire
Until I know all. More will I know:
Who shall the bane be unto Balder
And rob Odin's son of his age?

13. SIBYL: Hoder (5) brings hither the lovely scion.
He shall be unto Balder his bane
And rob Odin's son of his age.
Forced have I spoken. Now may I cease.

14. ODIN: Cease not, sibyl. I will inquire
Until I know all. More will I know:
Who shall avenge him harshly on Hoder
And bring Balder's bane to the pyre?

15. SIBYL: Rind (6) bears Vale (7) in western halls.
But one night old shall Odin's son battle;
He laves not his hands, nor combs he his hair
Ere he bears Balder's foe on the pyre.
Forced have I spoken. Now may I cease.

16. ODIN: Cease not, sibyl. I will inquire
Until I know all. More will I know:
Who are the maidens who then shall weep
And their kerchiefs fling to the skies?

17. SIBYL: No pilgrim you, as the sibyl thought.
You are Odin, father of eons.

18. ODIN: Nor sibyl you, nor wise seeress.
Rather are you three thurses' dam.

19. SIBYL: Ride home, Odin, with mind at rest!
So close comes no one again to me
Until Loki from fetters is free, and the forces,
Dissolvers of all, come to Ragnarok. (8)

Chapter 27

Contents

FOOTNOTES:

1. Cf. Vaftrudnismal, 53. (return to text)
2. Vagtam (way wont, accustomed to roads): pilgrim. (return to text)
3. Balder, the sun-god. (return to text)
4. Svafner: the Closer (he who puts to sleep); Odin. (return to text)
5. The blind god of darkness and ignorance. (return to text)
6. Rind: the cold winter earth. (return to text)
7. Vale: son of Odin. (return to text)
8. End of a world. (return to text)

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Chapter 27

Odens Korpgalder

(The Lay of Odin's Corpse or The Lay of Odin's Ravens)

TEXT

TRANSLATOR'S NOTES

This lay suggests the aftermath following the death of a planet. It has been omitted from many translations as scholars, led by the eminent Sophus Bugge, have tended to ignore it as being quite incomprehensible. It is a lay of great beauty, with a strong mystical appeal, as the reader senses the unsaid, dreamlike, all but unimaginable hiatus between periods of life when the planetary soul is immersed in the quiescence following death. Every kingdom of nature is held in breathless suspension, unmoving, unaware, unliving, awaiting the electrifying urges of a new dawn. Allfather alone is active. In all the Edda there is no more poignant piece of music than this stilling of the pulse of life, leaving each group of beings fixed in its own characteristic state of awareness for the long rest until the gods return.

Odin's two ravens, Hugin and Munin (mind and memory), "daily fly over the battlefield

earth" (1) and report back to Allfather by night. Here we again find mention of the gods' anxiety for Hugin, lest he fail to return. There is cogent reason for this. Mind entails choice: beings who possess this faculty, who have attained the function of intelligence and free will, as has humanity on earth, are faced with the options these present. They can, if they so choose, ally themselves totally with the matter-side of nature, the giants, in extreme cases severing their connection with their inner god, so that their characteristic contribution to the cosmic purpose is lost and the soul forgoes its opportunity to become immortal. Or they can gradually blend with the divine source of their existence. The critical choice is not made all at once; it is the cumulative effect of numberless small choices made through progressive stages of life. In the natural course of growth the soul unites each increment of experience with its divine source and so little by little merges with it.

So it is that at the end of a "day" of life, Hugin returns to Odin, bringing tidings of the manifest world and rejoining the divinity whence it originally flew. Its companion, Munin, is the container of all the record of events since the beginning of time. It is on the report of Munin that is built all attainment, as memory remains eternally as the foundation of future awareness.

It should be noted that both birds refer not merely to human consciousness but to corresponding properties as they manifest differently and in varying degrees throughout nature. A planet, such as Idun personifies, possesses the characteristics contributed by all its components, from elemental consciousnesses through the rudimentary condition of minerals, the greater sensitivity of plants, the budding awareness of animal lives, and self-conscious human souls; it includes also the grander status of perfected men and women as well as kingdoms of life superior to the human. Each awakening consciousness at any stage proceeds through life to gain greater scope and cognition, ever modifying its malleable, growing awareness and comprehension, but it is in the human that we first are able to distinguish the process.

At the end of her life, the planetary soul, Idun, is besieged at the fount of Urd by the anxious gods who seek to learn from her of the past life's growth and to imbibe the mead she can provide. Applying the theosophic keys it seems probable that her father Ivalde represents the previous world, the chain of lunar globes of which our present earth is the successor. Idun, his daughter, is "oldest of Ivalde's younger brood," hence belongs to our earth, and is the offspring of the corresponding globe of the former moon chain. However, this is not the most physical part of it: that was Nanna, the body which is no longer visible to us. Nanna died before our earth was born, before it was made from the materials that had composed her discarded form. She is the planet's lower constituents and so sinks into unconsciousness at death, pricked with the thorn of sleep, the "son of the sleep enchanter." This is the very thorn that brought oblivion to Sleeping Beauty (in another interpretation of the same tale), whose long sleep was ended by the kiss of life. The paralyzing thorn is borne on the icicle waves from the frost giant (22) whose minions characteristically begin to die each midnight, slain by the approaching dawn.

As the poem tells us, the sorrowing Idun had but little to contribute to the feast of the Aesir. However, the final verses of this poem bring us to the birth of a new life: as the hags and giants of the night slink away to their lairs " 'neath the noble ash tree's farthest root" (25), the gods reappear and there bursts into triumphant life a new world with new hope, heralded by the "mighty clarion-blower on the mountains of heaven" (26).
Odens Korpgalder

1. Allfather acts, elves discern,
Vaner know, norns point the way.
Trolls nourish, aeons give birth,
Thurses wait, Valkyries yearn.

2. The Aesir suffered grim forebodings,
Seers mistook the fruit-maid's runes. (2)
Urd's mead she guarded but could not defend it
From the insistence of the great host.

3. Hugin soars high to seek her out.
The Aesir are anxious if he delays;
To Longing-for-life (3) dreams become suffering;
Dim dreams surfeit the dead.

4. Dwarfs grow numb; their powers fall;
Worlds into Ginnung's waning sink; (4)
The Allwise fells beings often,
And again reassembles the fallen.

5. No longer stand fast the earth or the sun;
The stream of destruction stays no more aloft;
Hidden deep in Mimer's well
Lies all wisdom. Know you as yet or what?

6. Dwells in the dells the knowing maiden, (5)
Fallen from Yggdrasil down, from the ash;
The elves named her Idun; she is the oldest
Of Ivalde's younger brood.

7. Unhappy she seemed over this misfortune,
Lying captive under the lofty tree.
She liked it not with the daughter of Night,
Accustomed to having worlds for her dwelling.

8. The victory gods saw the sorrow of Nanna (6);
They sent her in Hel's house a wolf-disguise;
She put it on and changed disposition;
Confused with illusion, altered appearance.

9. Odin selected the watcher of Bafrast (7)
To ask of the dead sun's sorrowing widow
All that she knew of the fate of the world.
Brage and Lopt bore the testimony. (8)

10. Incantations they chanted, they rode on wolves,
The ruler and powers, to the ends of the world.
Odin, listening from Lidskjalf, (9)
Lets them journey far and wide.

11. Wise Heimdal asked if the mead-provider
Knew of the origin, age, and the end
Of the races of gods and her companions,
Of heaven, the void, and the earth.

12. Naught would she say, not a word would she utter
In response to the askers, nor discourse with them;
Her tears fell fast from her brain's shields;
Her power was numbed, exhausted, and dead.

13. Filled with sorrow Jorun appeared (10)
Before the gods, unable to speak;
The more they asked, the less she said;
All their words flowed in vain.

14. Foremost at the questing was Heimdal, the watcher
Of the horn of the father of hosts;
He brought with him Loki, the one born of Nal,
While Brage, the bard, stood guard.

15. The warriors of Odin attained to the Winehall,
Brought to the place by the sons of the past;
There entered Ygg's heroes to salute the Aesir,
And share in the feasting on mead.

16. They wished Hangatyr (11) health and contentment,
With well-being ever to brew his ale;
The drinkers were blissful to joy at the tankard,
Eager to feast with the Ever-young.

17. Each benched by Odin, the rulers together
Eat and are sated with Sarimner; (12)
With the ladle of Nikar (13) Skogul at the tables
Serves mead in the horns of memory.

18. At the feast much was asked by the gods of Heimdal,
By the goddesses of Loki.
All day long until darkness fell
They sought the seeress' wisdom and prophecy.

19. Ill they thought was resolved
This matter, and little commendable.
Cunning was needed to elicit
An answer from the sly witch.

20. Darkening, Odin speaks. All listen:
"Night shall be used for renewal of counsel;
Each one who can shall by the morrow
Find some solution for the Aesir's weal."

21. At the mountains' rim round the wintry earth
The offspring of Fenris, exhausted, fell.
The gods left the feast, saluting Ropt (14)
And Frigg, at the departure of the steed of night.

22. Soon from the cast, out of icicle-waves,
Comes the thorn of sleep to the frozen giant,
Whose minions are slain in beautiful Midgard
Every night at the midnight hour.

23. Then wanes the power. Hands grow numb.
A swoon assails the white sword-Ase; (15)
Unconsciousness reigns on the midnight breath;
Thought fails in tired beings.

24. But the son of the Dawn spurs on his charger,
Caparisoned gaily in precious gems.
Over Manhome flows radiance from the steed's mane;
He draws in the chariot Dvalin's toy. (16)

25. At the nourishing earth's northern horse-door,
Neath the noble ash-tree's farthest root,
Went to their lairs hags and giants,
Spooks, and dwarfs, and the black elves.

26. Up rose the gods. Forth shone the sun.
Northward to Niflheim night drew away;
Heimdal once more sprang up upon Bafrast,
Mighty clarion-blower on the mountains of heaven.

Chapter 28

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FOOTNOTES:

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 2. The planetary equivalent of Bargalmer, the "fruit giant." (return to text)
 3. What the Buddhists call tanha, thirst for life. It characterizes the lower elements which are drawn to matter. (return to text)
 4. Ginnungagap: the Unfathomable Void. (return to text)
 5. Idun: the soul of the dead planet is being questioned by the gods and made to yield its increment of consciousness. (return to text)
 6. Nanna: the lowest elements of the dead planet which, when the soul has left, become transformed into the illusory material to be reused in future forms. (return to text)
 7. Heimdal: the "white sword-Ase." (return to text)
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 9. The Shelf of Compassion. (return to text)
 10. The earth-to-be, Idun reborn. (return to text)
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 12. One of the boars that feed the One-harriers: Andrimner, air; Eldrimner, fire; Sarimner, water; the elements of earth experience. (return to text)
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 14. The maligned: Odin as the hierophant. (return to text)
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A Summing Up

The reader who has persisted thus far will have noticed a lack of the illustrations of gods and giants which usually adorn books on mythology: Norse myths generally sport a one-eyed Odin in a slouch hat and a brawny Thor wielding a primitive stone hammer. All embellishments of that kind have been omitted because such images have done more to discredit the myths than almost anything else. Instead a deliberate effort has been made to de-personify the natural powers and substances of the universe, in an attempt to reverse the accustomed tendency to see mythic deities in human form and endow matter with qualities it does not possess. The first is an indignity to which no planetary or stellar power should be subjected; the second attaches to inert substance properties out of keeping with its nature.

Having roamed through a small part of the Saemundar Edda, with brief excursions into other sources, we should by now have a reasonable familiarity with the method used by the bards to record the science of the gods. Through the peculiar magic of myths we find ourselves learning of the origin, age, and the end of things, for we are, each one of us, the questing Odin. The problems that confront us, when reduced to their most basic form, are the very same demands made by the spirit of existence as it hangs, suspended from higher worlds, in the Tree of Life: Odin below consecrated to Odin above in the tree, while he searches the depths for runes of wisdom, raising them with song — sound, motion, activity.

In the Voluspa and Grimnismal we are given an overview of cosmogony, a panorama of living worlds returning to action after a cosmic rest; we see the gods draw to their judgment seats, assemble to take council and determine the disposition of heavenly beings in the shelves and mansions of the Tree of Life. We learn as well of our human origins and parentage: that we are descended from the creative cosmic powers, composed of the universal elements which endow us with the properties that belong to our species.

Others of the lays have reference more particularly to our own globe and to the humanities that have succeeded one another thereon. We find a succession of giants and giantesses, races of mankind which display different characteristics and encounter fresh experiences to nourish the enduring consciousness. The human spirit traverses the shelves and mansions of our universal Tree of Life in search of experience, just as we play host to myriads of atomic worlds on the various levels of our own nature, while our elf, our ego, either acts on the behest of its divine hamingja or permits itself to be swayed by the importunities of the dwarf nature in us. At the same time our bodily organisms, along with the minerals and other kingdoms, help constitute the globes of our universe, just as the atomic lives in us provide the bodies that belong to us in the world we are currently inhabiting.

The myths are eminently reasonable. There are no extraordinary demands on credulity: the systems interlock, the twigs on their branches of the Tree of Life are themselves trees of life which ramify within the greater system. All the while the gods, the beneficent

powers, are in command of their own domains; not interfering in human concerns, nor subject to human cajolery and whims, they are intelligent worlds, austere and unapproachable by us yet always there, a realistic prospect of our own future. For we, like toddlers in a world of grownups, stand knee-high to their majesty and see only the least, most basic of their attributes.

The worlds are shown to live and die, and again live, and once again depart. After each planetary life the gods seek to learn from the "fruitful spirit" what has been gained on its sphere of duty. Within the human realm, we too enter our globe of action, gain some mead to regale the inner god, and exit into other worlds: worlds having different composition, different substantiality, other ranges of experience for the evolving consciousness to partake of. The squirrel of awareness has free access to all the many levels of its Tree of Life, and what pertains to one world does not have identical application in some other, though we have affinities with all. We live and learn in them, while each part of our nature has its own home base.

Ever since the mind and will of early humanity were quickened to think and choose, and since their — our — first steps as human beings were guided by the "beneficent powers" anthropomorphized as Rig, our paths have ranged through many a swamp and quicksand where the inner light has been dimmed, and also over peaks of grand inspiration. The human mind being part and parcel of the mind of an intelligent universe cannot be divorced from, or contain something that is lacking in, the whole of which it forms a part but must constitute an integral portion of it. We have the assurance of the myths that when our weary journey through the self-discovering vales of matter will be completed, we shall regain our divinity and rightfully assume a conscious and responsible role in the governance of the world. For within us is a potent and undeniable link with the bright intelligences that govern planetary and solar systems; they are the hierarchs whose essence pervades their domain just as a human being permeates with consciousness all the teeming lives within its soul and body. And lest we lose touch with the source of our inspiration, the thought world we inhabit is impregnated with the signals whereby we may find truth.

Never in all our ventures has the light of inspiration been wholly lacking; always there have existed the mythic ideals, so that those who seek truth earnestly can find response in every age. For this the world's legends and allegories endure. When inward necessity and altruistic love impel, they can become more fully known; at other times they remain concealed within their disguises of epic and fairy tale. When studied, they reaffirm eternal values and virtues, and they teach us how to live: for, as they clearly show, our task as a human kingdom is to transmute the grosser substance of our giant world into the more enduring treasures of consciousness — the sustenance that feeds the gods — in us and in the systems of worlds.

Withal myths teach us to know truth and to value it: not data such as may be stored in a computer memory, but the growing sphere of truth that affords us ever freer vision and opens the inner worlds of a living kosmos to our comprehension. This assurance of our divine origins and universal destiny gives us a basis for discrimination that is always

valid: no mere codified set of virtues (which, as everyone knows, can become vices when misapplied), but a solid foundation of character, an inner direction finder that points to the true in any situation.

The interpretations offered here are far from exhaustive, presenting merely an outline of a few of the main themes of theosophic philosophy recognized in some of the lays and stories of the Edda. Not every symbol has been noted, nor every kenning explained; many will strike the reader without having to be pointed out. Other passages are too obscure to be readily understood and, rather than confuse or, possibly, mislead the reader, they are left to the intuitive to discern for themselves. It is believed that with the general keys to symbolism that are proposed, a thoughtful and perceptive mind may find successive layers of understanding of not only the Norse but also other world myths. What has been scrutinized is also incomplete, being only a small proportion of the material available in the Edda. If this fragment of runic wisdom can encourage others to undertake a more complete study of the ancient records, it will have served a purpose. There is a real need in our present world to restore spiritual reverence and reason to human endeavor, before we immerse ourselves further in a universe without meaning. The ancient gods are not dead; far from it. They go about their tasks of keeping worlds in continuing, harmonious functioning, they ensure the balance of nature's elements and maintain on all levels the delicate efficiency that so astounds the naturalist in our physical environment. The maverick of nature is man. The kingdoms that trail behind us are largely dependent on us and suffer unduly from our mistakes, while those that precede us on the ladder of existence, though not bound by our foolishness, are nevertheless deprived of our cooperation when we act with less than the best of our humanness.

It is needful that we acquire awareness of the next step in our Od, the human soul, must successfully gain his heavenly bride at the end of his travail through windcold vales of matter, aided by the talents and qualities bestowed on him by his mother, the past. Only when prepared and willing can we fulfill our human destiny and, as Svipdag united with Menglad, our hamingja, share in the tasks of the years and the ages.

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by Sir James George Frazer

[1922]

Image: (J.M.W. Turner) Aeneas and the Sybil have just presented the Golden Bough, which allows entry to the Elysian Fields, to the gatekeeper.

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Irish Fairy Tales

by James Stephens

[1920]

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Frontispiece to Celtic Twilight: Painting of W.B. Yeats [Public Domain Image]

The Celtic Twilight

William Butler Yeats

[1893, 1902]

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This etext corresponds to the second (1902) expanded edition of the Celtic Twilight. This is one of the best-known collections of Yeats' prose; in it he explores the longstanding connection between the people of Ireland and the inhabitants of the land of Fairy. Yeats, who had profound mystic and visionary beliefs, writes with conviction of the reality of Fairies, both in his own experience, and in the everyday life of the Irish. This relatively short work serves as a way for readers to discover Yeats' powerful wordcraft and get an overview of celtic Fairy lore.

This etext, created at sacred-texts in 2001, was revised in January 2004 from an original copy of the 1902 edition, to include page numbers and correspond more closely to the formatting of the original, and to correct a few transcription errors. It was reformatted in 2009. The Project Gutenberg version of Celtic Twilight is based on the sacred-texts version.

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The Fairy Feller's Master Stroke (detail), by Richard Dadd [1855-64] (Public Domain Image)

Irish Witchcraft and Demonology

by St. John D. Seymour

[1913]

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This is a survey of the Witch persecution in Ireland, as well as a wide array of other paranormal events such as poltergeists, ghosts, apparitions and even an early UFO account. Very readable, yet well documented, this book has extensive and fascinating quotes from historical source documents.

Seymour proposes that the witch-craze was more muted in Ireland than elsewhere in Europe. Relatively speaking, there appear to have been fewer cases in Ireland. This doesn't mean that the consequences were any less harsh for the accused. In these texts we can see how people exhibiting what we would today consider schizophrenic or senile behavior were vulnerable to being accused of witchcraft.--J.B. Hare, Nov. 2002.

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Autumn Fairy [1918] (Public Domain Image)

The Fairy-Faith in Celtic Countries

By W. Y. Evans-Wentz

[1911]

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This is one of the most in-depth and scholarly attempts to explain the phenomena of the Celtic belief in fairies. Based on Evans-Wentz' Oxford doctoral thesis, it includes an extensive survey of the literature from many different perspectives, including folk-lore, history, anthropology and psychology. The heart of the book is the ethnographic fieldwork conducted by Evans-Wentz, an invaluable snapshot of the fairy belief system taken just on the cusp of modernity. There are regional surveys of the fairy-faith in Ireland, Wales, Scotland, Brittany and the Isle of Man. Evans-Wentz later went on to become one of the leading authorities on Buddhism, and published many of the key documents of Tibetan Buddhism including the Tibetan Book of the Dead.

Evans-Wentz examines each of the hypothetical explanations of the fairy phenomena. Among these are the theories that fairies were a reclusive race of dwarfs, that they are disembodied spirits, or that they are a figment of our imaginations. Evans-Wentz concludes that they may indeed be a manifestation of inhabitants of a higher reality that only some of us are able to view, let alone understand.

We come away from this study with a multi-dimensional view of the fairies, who, much like the grey aliens of UFO belief, inhabit a narrative which seems too consistent to be the product of insanity, yet too bizarre for conventional explanation.

Production Notes: This is a complete overhaul of this etext. I have added linked footnotes, anchored page numbers, the table of contents, a previously missing chapter, and corrected numerous formatting and transcription errors.

--John Bruno Hare

January 27th, 2004

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Myths and Legends of the Celtic Race

by Thomas Rolleston

[1911]

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Painting: Invocation, by Lord Frederick Leighton, 19th cent. (public domain image)

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Open Source for the Human Soul

THE
THE VEIL OF ISIS;
OR,
MYSTERIES OF THE DRUIDS
BY
W. WINWOOD READE.
(1861)

"By the bright circle of the golden sun,
By the bright courses of the errant moon,
By the dread potency of every star,
In the mysterious Zodiac's burning girth,
By each and all of these supernal signs,
We do adjure thee, with this trusty blade
To guard yon central oak, whose holy stem,
Involves the spirit of high Taranis:
Be this thy charge."-MASON

DEDICATION.

TO EMILY***.

As those presents are always the most fashionable, and sometimes the most valued, which cannot be used, I give you this book, which you will not be able to read, but which, perhaps, you will kindly preserve in memory of its writer.

An author can pay no higher compliment to a friend than to dedicate to her a work upon which he has spent much labor and anxiety. This effort of a young man to redeem a mistake, perhaps a fault, in his literary life, deserves to be sealed with your name, for it is you who have repeatedly urged him to the task, and presided over it like a guardian angel, with kind and consoling words.

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BOOK THE FIRST.

DARKNESS

THE VEIL OF ISIS;

OR,

THE MYSTERIES OF THE DRUIDS.

THERE is no study so saddening, and none so sublime as that of the early religions of mankind. To trace back the worship of God to its simple origin, and to mark the gradual process of those degrading superstitions, and unhallowed rites which darkened, and finally extinguished His presence in the ancient world.

At first men enjoyed the blessings of nature as children do, without inquiring into causes. It was sufficient for them that the earth gave them herbs, that the trees bore them fruit, that the stream quenched their thirst. They were happy, and every moment though unconsciously they offered a prayer of gratitude to Him whom as yet they did not know.

And then a system of theology arose amongst them vague and indefinite, as the waters of the boundless sea. They taught each other that the sun, and the earth, the moon, and the stars were moved and illumined by a Great Soul which was the source of all life, which caused the birds to sing, the brooks to murmur, and the sea to heave. It was a sacred Fire which shone in the firmament, and in mighty flames. It was a strange Being which animated the, souls of men, and which when the bodies died, returned to itself again.

They silently adored this Great Soul in the beginning, and spoke of Him with reverence, and sometimes raised their eyes timidly to His glittering dwelling-place on high.

And soon they learned to pray. When those whom they loved lay dying, they uttered wild lamentations, and flung their arms despairingly towards the mysterious Soul; for in times of trouble the human mind so imbecile, so helpless, clings to something that is stronger than itself.

As yet they worshipped only the sun, the moon, and the stars-and not as Gods but as visions of that Divine Essence, which alone ruled and pervaded the earth, the sky, and the sea.

They adored Him kneeling, with their hands clasped, and their eyes raised. They offered Him no sacrifices, they built Him no temples; they were content to offer Him their hearts which were full of awe, in His own temple which was full of grandeur. And it is said that there are yet some barbarous islands where men have no churches nor ceremonies, and where they worship God, reflected in the work of His thousand hands.

But they were not long content with this simple service. Prayer which had first been an inspiration fell into a system, and men already grown wicked prayed the Deity to give them abundance of wild beast's skins, and to destroy their enemies.

They ascended eminences, as if hoping that thus being nearer God, He would prefer their prayers to those of their rivals. Such is the origin of that superstitious reverence for high places which was universal throughout the whole of the heathen world.

Then Orpheus was born. And he invented instruments which to his touch and to his lips,

gave forth notes of surpassing sweetness, and with these melodies he enticed the wondering savages into the recesses of the forest, and there taught them precepts of obedience to the great Soul, and of loving-kindness towards each other in harmonious words.

So they devoted groves and forests to the worship of the Deity.

There were men who had watched Orpheus, and who had seen and envied his power over the herd who surrounded him. They resolved to imitate him, and having studied these barbarians, they banded together, and called themselves their priests. Religion -is divine, but its ministers are men. And alas! sometimes they are demons with the faces and wings of angels.

The simplicity of men, and the cunning of their priests has destroyed or corrupted all the religions of the world.

These priests taught the people to sacrifice the choicest herbs and flowers. They taught them formulas of prayer, and bade them make so many obeisances to the sun, and to worship those flowers which opened their leaves when he rose, and which closed them as he set.

They composed a language of symbols which was perhaps necessary, since letters had not been invented, but which perplexed the people and perverted them from the worship of the one God.

Thus the sun and moon were worshipped as emblems of God, and fire as an emblem of the sun, water as an emblem of the moon.

The serpent was to be worshipped also as an emblem of wisdom and eternal youth, since it renews its skin every year, and thus periodically casts off all symptoms of old age.

And the bull, most vigorous of animals, and whose horns resemble those of the crescent moon.

The priests observed the avidity with which the barbarians adored these symbols, and increased them. To worship the visible is a disease of the soul inherent to all mankind, and the disease which these men could have healed they pandered to.

It is true that the first generation of men might have looked upon these merely as the empty symbols of a Divine Being, but it is also certain that in time the vulgar forgot the God in the emblem, and worshipped that which their fathers had only honored. Egypt was the fountain-head of these idolatries, and it was in Egypt that the priests first applied real attributes to the sun, and to the moon whom they called his wife.

It may perhaps interest you to listen to the first fable of the world.

From the midst of chaos was born Osiris, and at his birth a voice was heard proclaiming-"The ruler of all the earth is born."

From the same dark and troubled-womb were born Isis the Queen of Light, and Typhon the Spirit of Darkness.

This Osiris traveled over the whole world, and civilized its inhabitants, and taught them the art of agriculture. But on his return to Egypt the jealous Typhon laid a stratagem for him, and in the midst of a banquet had him shut up in a chest which exactly fitted his body. He was nailed down in his prison, which cast into the Nile floated down to the sea by the Taitic mouth, which even in the time of Plutarch was never mentioned by an Egyptian but with marks of detestation.

When Isis learnt these sad new she cut off a lock of her hair, and put on her mourning robes, and wandered through the whole country in search of the chest which contained the dead body of her husband.

At length she learnt that the chest had been carried by the waves to the shore of Byblos, and had there lodged in the branches of a tamarisk bush, which quickly shot up and became a large and beautiful tree, growing round the chest so that it could not be seen.

The king of the country amazed at the vast size the tree had so speedily acquired, ordered it to be cut down to be hewn into a pillar to support the roof of his palace-the chest being still concealed in the trunk.

The voice which had spoken from Heaven at the birth of Osiris made known these things to poor Isis, who went to the shore of Byblos and sat down silently by a fountain to weep. The damsels of the queen met her and accosted her, and the queen appointed her to be nurse to her child. And Isis fed the infant with her finger instead of with her breast, and put him every night into fire to render him immortal, while transforming herself into a swallow she hovered round the pillar which was her husband's tomb, and bemoaned her unhappy fate.

It happened that the queen thus discovered her, and shrieked when she saw her child surrounded by flames. By that cry she broke the charm and deprived him of immortality.

By that cry Isis was summoned back to her goddess-form, and stood before the awe-struck queen shining with light and diffusing sweet fragrances around.

She cut open the pillar, and took the coffin with her, and opened it in a desert. There she embraced the cold corpse of Osiris, and wept bitterly.

She returned to Egypt and hid the coffin in a remote place: but Typhon, hunting by moonlight, chanced to find it, and divided the corpse into fourteen pieces. Again Isis set

out on her weary search throughout the whole land, sailing over the fenny parts in a boat made of papyrus. She recovered all the fragments except one which had been thrown into the sea. Each of these she buried in the place where she found it, which explains why in Egypt there are so many tombs of Osiris.

And instead of the limb which was lost, she gave the phallus to the Egyptians-the disgusting worship of which was thence carried into Italy, into Greece, and into all the countries of the East.

When Isis died, she was buried in a grove near Memphis. Over her grave was raised a statue covered from head to foot with a black veil. And underneath was engraved these divine words:

I am all that has been, that is, that shall be, and none among mortals has yet dared to raise my veil.

Beneath this veil are concealed all the mysteries and learning of the past. A young scholar, his fingers covered with the dust of venerable folios, his eyes weary and reddened by nightly toil will now attempt to lift a corner of this mysterious and sacred covering.

These two Deities, Isis and Osiris were the parents of all the Gods and Goddesses of the Heathens, or were indeed those Gods themselves worshipped under different names. The fable itself was received into the mythologies of the Hindoos and the Romans. Sira is said to have mutilated Brahma as Typhon did Osiris, and Venus to have lamented her slain Adonis, as Isis wept for her husband-god.

As yet the sun and moon alone were worshipped under these two names. And as we have seen, besides these twin beneficial spirits, men who had begun to recognize sin in their hearts had created an Evil One who struggled with the power of light, and fought with them for the souls of men.

It is natural for man to fabricate something that is worse than himself. Even in the theology of the American Indians which is the purest of the modern world, there is found a Mahitou or dark Spirit.

Osiris or the sun was now worshipped throughout the whole world, though under different names. He was the Mithra of the Persians, the Brahma of India, the Baal or Adonis of the Phoenicians, the Apollo of the Greeks, the Odin of Scandinavia, the Hu of the Britons, and the Baiwe of the Laplanders.

Isis also received the names of Islene, Ceres, Rhea, Venus, Vesta, Cybele, Niobe, Melissa--Nehalennia in the North; Isi with the Indians; Puzza among the Chinese; and Ceridwen among the ancient Britons.

The Egyptians were sublime philosophers who had dictated theology to the world. And

in Chaldea arose the first astrologers who watched the heavenly bodies with curiosity as well as with awe, and who made divine discoveries, and who called themselves The Interpreters of God.

To each star they gave a name, and to each day in the year they gave a star.

And the Greeks and Romans who were poets, wreathed these names into legends. Each name was a person, each person was a god.

From these stories of the stars originated the angels of the Jews, the genii of the Arabs, the heroes of the Greeks, and the saints of the Romish Church.

Now corruption grew upon corruption, and superstition flung a black and hideous veil over the doctrines of religion. A religion is lost as soon as it loses its simplicity: truth has no mysteries: it is deceit alone that lurks in obscurity.

Men multiplied God into a thousand names, and created Him always in their own image. Him, too, whom they had once deemed unworthy of any temple less noble than the floor of the earth and the vast dome of the sky, they worshipped in caves, and then in temples which were made of the trunks of trees rudely sculptured, and ranged in rows to imitate groves, and with other trunks placed upon them transversely.

Such were the first buildings of worship erected by man from no reverence for the Deity, but to display that which they doubtless conceived to be a stupendous effort in art.

It may not be needless to remind some of my readers that a superior being must view the elegant temples of the Romans, the gorgeous pagodas of India, and our own Gothic cathedrals with feelings similar to those with which we contemplate the rude efforts of the early heathens, who deemed God unworthy of the fruits and flowers which he himself had made, and offered to him the entrails of beasts, and the hearts of human beings.

We may compare an ancient and fallen religion to the ship of the Argonauts, which the Greeks desiring to preserve to posterity, repairing in so many different ways, that at length there did not remain a fragment of that vessel which had born to Colchis the conqueror of the Golden Fleece.

Let us pass over a lapse of years, and then contemplate the condition of these nations in whom religion had been first born. We find the Egyptians adoring the most common of plants, the most contemptible of beasts, the most hideous of reptiles. The solemnity and pomp of their absurd ceremonies held them up to the ridicule of the whole world.

Clemens of Alexandria describes one of their temples:--(Poëdag. lib. iii).--

"The walls shine with gold and silver, and with amber, and sparkle with the gems of India and Ethiopia: and the recesses are concealed by splendid curtains. But if you

enter the penetralia, and inquire for the image of God for whose sake the fane was built; one of the Pastophori, or some other attendant on the temple approaches with a solemn and mysterious face, and putting aside the veil suffers you to obtain a glimpse of the divinity. There you behold a snake, a crocodile, or a cat, or some other beast, a fitter inhabitant of a cavern, or a bog than of a temple."

The priests of Egypt, always impostors, but once so celebrated, had now degenerated into a race of jugglers.

Also the Chaldœans lived upon the fame of their fathers, and upon their own base trickeries.

The Brachmans or Brahmins, those priests of India, once so virtuous and so wise-ah! they too had fallen. Once they had forbidden the shedding of so much as an insects blood: one day in the year alone, at the feast of Jagam, they were authorized to sacrifice the flesh of a beast, and from this many had refrained from attending, unable to conquer their feelings of abhorrence.

But now they had learnt from the fierce Scythians and from the Phoenicians who traded on their coasts to sacrifice the wife upon her husbands pyre--to appease the gentle Brahmah with the blood of men.

Now the angels who had presided over them became savage demons, who scourged them on to cruel penances, nay to life-times of suffering and famine.

In the sacred groves where once the Brachman Fathers had taught their precepts of love, men emaciated, careworn, dying, wandered sadly, waiting for death as tortured prisoners wait for their liberty.

But worse still, these wicked priests sought through the land for the most beautiful young women, and trained them to dance in the temples, and to entice the devotees to their arms with lustful attitudes and languishing looks, and with their voices which mingled harmoniously with the golden bells suspended on their feet. They sang hymns to the Gods in public, and in private enriched the treasures of the pagoda with their infamous earnings. Thus a pure and simple religion was debased by the avarice and lewdness of its priests: till the temples became a den of thieves: till prostitution sat enthroned upon the altars of the Gods.

Greece and Rome buried in sloth and luxury did not escape the general contamination. The emblem of generation which Isis had bestowed upon the Egyptians, and which they had held in abstract reverence, had now obtained a prominent place in the festivals of these nations as did the Lingam in those of the Hindoos. It was openly paraded in processions in the streets: it was worn by Roman nations in bracelets upon their arms.

The sacred festivals and mysteries which they had received from the Egyptians, and for which the women had been wont to prepare themselves by continence, and the men by

fasting, were now mere vehicles for depravities of the lowest kind. Men were permitted to join the women in their worship of Bacchus, of Adonis, of the Bona Dea, and even of Priapus, and so dissolute did the Dionusia become, that the civil powers were compelled to interfere with those of religion, and the Bacchanalia were abolished by a decree of the Roman senate.

And the Jews, the chosen people of God, had not their religion changed? had not God, weary with their sins, yielded them to captivity, scourged them with sorrow, menaced them with curses?

They worshipped Baal-peor, the Priapus of Assyria, they sacrificed their children to Moloch: they had dancing-girls in the holy temple.

I will not go deeper into particulars so degrading to human nature. I will rather invite you to follow me to a corner of the world where, at least for many ages religion was preserved in its pristine purity, and whose priests, through a barbarous soldiery, were received as martyrs in heaven before they had learned to be knaves upon earth.

It was an isolated spot unknown to the world in the earlier ages of vice. It is now a kingdom renowned for its power and for its luxuries from hemisphere to hemisphere.

It was encircled by the blue waters of the German and Atlantic Seas, and abounded in the choicest gifts of nature.

It was called The White Island from those cliffs which still frown so coldly upon Gaul, and The Land of Green Hills from its verdant mountains. Come with me to its shores, and I will show you its priests in their white robes, and its warriors in the blue paint of war, and its virgins with their long and glossy yellow hair.

But first I will lead you back into the past, and relate to you why this land was called Albion, and why Britain.

BOOK THE SECOND.

ABORIGINES.

I.

ALBION.

AS travelers, who have lost their way by night, gaze ever towards the east for the first rays of light and hope, so we who grope in the darkness of antiquity must direct our eyes to the land of the rising sun, whence learning and life itself first sprang.

Listen then to a romance of the East.

Danaus, King of Greece, had fifty sons, whom he married to the fifty daughters of his brother Ægistus, King of Egypt. But soon these women thirsted for dominion, and conspired secretly to slay their husbands and to rule in their steads. But the youngest and the most beautiful had a tender heart, which crept from her lips in words of warning

to her father and her spouse. Then they were all seized and set adrift in ships upon the sea, which after many storms bore them in safety to a large and uninhabited island.

Here they staid and named it Albion, after Albina their eldest sister, and here they maintained themselves by the chase, killing the deer and the boars, and wild bulls, and large birds which they found in the forests with arrows and bolts, and bowstrings, and snares and pitfalls.

And while filled with meat and drink, and with lustful thoughts, they lay sleeping on the ground covered with the skins of wild beasts, dark brooding spirits swept towards them from the sky, and encircled them with their shadowy arms, and intoxicated them with their flaming breath

By these were born huge and hideous giants which soon bore others, till they filled the whole land with a strange and fierce crew.

II.

BRITAIN.

MEANWHILE Troy had fallen: the wanderings of Eneas were past: and Ascanius had died leaving behind him his son Silvius.

The son of Silvius loved a maid, who became pregnant. Then the wise men and women of the land were sent for, and all those who knew songs of magic art. They cast their lots and found sorrowful spells: that a child would be born through whom both his father and mother would suffer death: that through their death he would be driven from the land, and after a long time would be crowned with honor.

His mother died as she gave him to the world, and the child, whom they named Brutus, when he had become a youth, shot his father through the breast a-hunting the deer.

His kindred banished him from the land, and he sailed sadly over the sea-streams into Greece where he headed an insurrection against Pandrasus the king, and with such success that the king offered him all his ships, and treasures, and Imogen his only daughter if he would consent to seek another kingdom.

So Brutus, with his followers, like Eneas of old, sailed forth upon the waters in search of a new land.

After two days and two nights the sea became blue: the wild waves were hushed: they came to a desolate island: its inhabitants had been slain by the pirates: the timid deer coursed over its wasted shores.

But they found there a marble temple, and within the fair and beautiful image of Diana.

Brutus with twelve wise men, and with Gerion, his priest, entered the temple while his followers remained without. He bore a vessel of red gold in his hand: it was filled with

wine and with the milk of a white hind which he had killed. Having kindled a fire by the altar, he walked around it nine times. He called to the goddess beloved of his heart: he kissed the altar and poured the wine and milk upon the fire.

"Lady Diana! loved Diana! High Diana!" he cried. "Help me in my need. Teach me whither I may go and wherein I may dwell. And there I will make thee a lofty dwelling and honor thee with great worship.

Then he spread the hide of the white hind upon the altar, and kneeling upon it fell asleep. In his dreams he beheld Diana floating towards him with sweet smiles. She laid her hands like a wreath of flowers upon his head, saying:

Beyond Gaul in the west thou shalt find a winsome land: therein thou shalt prosper. Therein is fowl: there is fish: there dwell fair deer: there is wood: there is water: there is much desert: grim giants dwell in the land. It is called Albion.

For thirty days and thirty nights they sailed past Africa and over the lake of Silvius, and over the lake of Philisteus: by Ruscikadan they took the sea, and by the mountain country of Azare. They fought with the pirates, and gained from them such treasures that there was not a man in the fleet who did not wear gold and pall. And by the pillars of Hercules they were encompassed by mermen who sing songs so sweet that mariners will rest slothfully on their oars, and listen to them for days without wearying of their songs to hear--these impeded them much with their wicked crafts, but they escaped them safely.

In a peaceful sea, and among the playing fish they came to Dartmouth in Totnes. There the ships bit the sands, and with merry hearts the warriors went ashore.

It happened after many days that Brutus and his people were celebrating holy writs, with meat, with drink, and with merry glee sounds: with silver and with gold: with horses and with vestments.

Twenty strong giants descended the hills: trees were their clubs: in the centre of their foreheads was a single eye vivid as the blue ice. They hurled huge stones and slew five hundred of the Trojans. But soon the fierce steel arrows of the Trojans whistled through the air, and blood began to spurt from their monstrous sides. They tried to fly; but those darts followed them swift and revengeful, as birds of prey winged with the dark feathers of death.

Nineteen were slain and Geog-magog, their leader was brought bound before Brutus, who ordered a wrestling match to be held between the giant and Corineus, a chieftain of his army.

A mighty crowd gathered upon the downs by the sea-cliff.

Corineus and the giant advanced towards each other, they yoked their arms and stood

breast to breast. Their eyes gushed blood, their teeth gnashed like wild boars, their bones cracked. Now their faces were black and swollen, now red and flaming with rage. Geog-magog thrust Corineus off his breast and drawing him back broke three of his ribs with his mighty hand. But Corineus was not overcome, he hugged the giant grimly to his waist, and grasping him by the girdle swung him over the cliff upon the rocks below.

Which spot is called "Geog-magog's leap" to this day. And to Corineus, the conqueror, was given a dukedom, which was thence called Corinee and thence Cornwall.

Brutus having conquered the giant off-spring of the treacherous sisters, built a New Troy, and erected temples to the great Diana, and caused her to be worshipped throughout the land.

Which was named Britain after Brutus, the first man who set foot upon its shores.

III.

ANALYSIS.

FABLES are seldom actual impostures. They are usually truths disguised in gaudy or grotesque garments, but so disguised that the most profound philosophers are often at a loss how to separate the tinsel from the gold.

But even when they remain insolvable enigmas, they are, at least, to be preferred to the etymological eureka's and tedious conjectures with which antiquarians clog the pages of history, and which are equally false and less poetical.

My fable of Albion is derived from the ancient chronicles of Hugh de Genesis, an historiographer now almost forgotten, and is gravely advanced by John Hardyng, in his uncouth rhymes, as the source of that desire for sovereignty which he affirms to be a peculiarity of his own countrywomen.

The story of Brû or Brutus was first published by Geoffrey of Monmouth, and was generally supposed to have been a monkish fabrication, till it was discovered in the historical poems of Tyssilia, a Welsh bard.

It is worthy of remark that the boys of Wales still amuse themselves by cutting out seven enclosures in the sward, which they call the City of Troy, and dance round and between them as if in imitation of the revolution of the planets.

In a poem by Taliesin, the Ossian of Wales, called The Appeasing, of Lhudd, a passage occurs, of which this is a literal translation:

"A numerous race, fierce, they are said to have been,
Were thy original colonists, Britain, first of isles,
Natives of a country in Asia, and the city of Gafiz
Said to have been a skilful people, but the district is unknown
Which was mother to these children, warlike adventurers on the sea;

Clad in their long dress, who could equal them?
Their skill is celebrated, they were the dread of Europe."

This is strong evidence in favor of the Phœnicians, at that time the pirate-scourges of the sea, but in the Welsh triads, or traditional chronicles, we read that--

"The first of the three chieftains who established the colony was Hu, the Mighty, who came with the original settlers. They came over the Hazy Sea from the summer country, which is called Deffrobani, that is where Constantinoblys now stands."--Triad 4.

It maybe possible to reconcile these contradictions of history in its simplest state, to which I might add a hundred from later writers.

We learn from Josephus that the Scythians, were called Magogœi by the Greeks, and it is probable that these (who certainly did migrate to Britain at a remote period) were the real aborigines, and the race alluded to in the fourth Triad. That then the warlike race of Taliesin also migrated from another region of the East, and that their battles with the Scythians gave rise to the fables of Brutus and Magog; for it was a practice, common enough with illiterate nations, to express heroes in their war-tales by the images of giants.

This superstition is somewhat borne out by the assertion of Tacitus and other classical writers, that at the time of Cæsar's invasion, there were three distinct races in Britain, especially contrasting-the red-haired, large-limbed, and blue-eyed Celts of the North, with the Silures of Devon, Cornwall, and the Cassiterides or Scilly Isles, who had swarthy faces and dark curly hair, like the Iberi of Spain.

But let us pass on from such dateless periods of guess-work, to that in which The White Island first obtained notice from those philosophers, and poets, and historians, whom now we revere and almost deify.

IV.

DESCRIPTION.

THE north of the island was inhabited by wild hordes of savages, who lived upon the bark of trees, and upon the precarious produce of the chase; went naked, and sheltered themselves from the weather under the cover of the woods, or in the mountain caves.

The midland tribes were entirely pastoral. They lived upon the flesh and milk which their flocks afforded them, and clothed themselves in their skins.

While the inhabitants of the south, who had been polished by intercourse with strangers, were acquainted with many of the arts of civilization, and were ruled by a priesthood which was second to none in the world for its learning and experience.

They manured their ground with marl, and sowed corn, which they stored in thatched houses, and from which they took as much as was necessary for the day and having

dried the ears, beat the grain out, bruised it, and baked it into bread.

They ate little of this bread at their banquets, but great quantities of flesh, which they either boiled in water, or broiled upon the coals, or roasted upon spits. They drank ale or metheglin, a liquor made of milk and honey, and sat upon the skins of wolves or dogs.

They lived in small houses built in a circular form, thatched with rushes into the shape of a cone; an aperture being left by which the smoke might escape.

Their dress was of their own manufacture. A square mantle covered a vest and trousers, or a deeply-plaited tunic of braided cloth; the waist was encircled by a belt, rings adorned the second finger of each hand, and a chain of iron or brass was suspended from the neck. These mantles, at first the only covering of the Britons, were of one color, with long hair on the outside, and were fastened upon the breast by a clasp, with the poorer classes by a thorn.

The heads were covered with caps made of rushes, and their feet with sandals of untanned skin; specimens of which are still to be met with-of the former in Wales, of the latter in the Shetland Isles.

The women wore tunics, wrought and interwoven with various colors, over which was a loose robe of coarser make, secured with brazen buckles. They let their hair flow at freedom, and dyed it yellow like the ladies of ancient Rome; and they wore chains of massive gold about their necks, bracelets upon their arms, rings upon their fingers.

They were skilled in the art of weaving, in which, however, the Gauls had obtained a still greater proficiencie. The most valuable of their cloths were manufactured of fine wool of different tints, woven chequer-wise, so as to fall into small squares of various colors. They also made a kind of cloth, which, without spinning or weaving, was, when worked up with vinegar, so hard and impenetrable, that it would turn the edge of the sharpest sword.

They were equally famous for their linen, and sail-cloths constituted a great part of their trade.

When they had finished the linen in, the loom, they had this curious method of bleaching it:

The flax having been whitened before it was sent to the loom, the unspun yarn was placed in a mortar where it was pounded and beaten into water; it was then sent to the weaver, and when it was received from him made into cloth, it was laid upon a large smooth stone, and beaten with broad-headed cudgels, the juice of poppies being mingled with the water.

For scouring cloths, they used a soap invented by themselves, which they made from the fat of animals and the ashes of certain vegetables.

Distinct from these southern tribes, were the inhabitants of the Cassiterides, who wore long black garments, and beards falling on each side of their mouths like wings, and who are described by Pliny as "carrying staves with three serpents curling round like Furies in a tragedy."

It is probable that the nudity of the northern nations did not proceed from mere barbarous ignorance. We know that savages are first induced to wear clothing, not from shame, but from vanity; and it was this passion which restrained them from wearing the skins of beasts, or the gaudy clothes of their civilized neighbors.

For it was their custom to adorn their bodies with various figures by a tedious and painful process. At an early age, the outlines of animals were impressed with a pointed instrument into the skin; a strong infusion of woad, (a Gallic herb from which a blue dye was extracted) was rubbed into the punctures, and the figures expanding with the growth of the body retained their original appearance. Like the South-Sea Islanders they esteemed that to be a decoration which we consider a disfigurement, and these tatooings (which were used by the Thracians and by the ancient inhabitants of Constantinople, and which were forbidden by Moses, Levit. xix. 28.) were only displayed by Southern races as a kind of war-paint.

Like the Gauls, who endeavored to make their bright red hair rough and bristly not for ornament, but as a terror to their enemies, these Britons on the day of battle flung off their clothes, and with swords girded to their naked sides, and spear in hand, marched with joyful cries against their enemies.

Also upon certain festivals they, with their wives and children, daubed themselves from head to foot with the blue dye of the woad and danced in circles bowing to the altar.

But the Picts, or painted men, as the Romans named them, colored themselves with the juice of green grass.

Hunting was their favorite exercise and sport, and Britain which was then filled with vast swamps and forests afforded them a variety of game.

The elephant and the rhinoceros, the moose-deer, the tiger and other beasts now only known in Eastern climes, and mammoth creatures that have since disappeared from the face of the earth made the ground tremble beneath their stately tread. The brown bear preyed upon their cattle, and slept in the hollow oaks which they revered. The hyenas yelped by night, and prowled round the fold of the shepherd. The beaver fished in their streams, and built its earthen towns upon their banks. And hundreds of wolves, united by the keen frosts of winter, gathered round the rude habitations of men and howled from fierce hunger, rolling their horrible green eyes and gnashing their white teeth.

Their seas abounded with fish, but since they held water sacred they would not, injure its inhabitants for they believed them to be spirits.

I will now consider the primeval state of trade in Britain, now the greatest commercial country in the world.

It was periodically visited by the Phœnicians, a crafty and enterprising nation whose commerce embraced the whole of the known world, from the frozen borders of Scythia to the burning coasts of Africa and Hindostan; whose vessels like the Spanish galleons and our own East Indiamen of old were equipped equally for trade or war; who robbed the weak with their drawn swords, and the strong with their cunning arts; who traded with Arabia for spices and precious stones; with Damascus for the Mesopotamian white wool, and for wine of Aleppo, a beverage so costly that it was drunk by kings alone: with Judœa for fruits of the soil, corn, grape-honey, oil and balm; with Armenia for mules and chariot-horses, flocks and herds; with the shores of the Baltic for amber; with Spain for minerals; with the Euxine for tunny-fish; with India for the cinnamon of Ceylon, for cotton garments and for steel which sold in Arabia for twice its weight in gold, and of which the Damascus blades so celebrated in the middle ages were made.

It was not long before they discovered the lead and tin mines of Cornwall and the Cassiterides, which would appear (from several flint-headed tools called celts lately discovered within them) to have been worked by the Britons themselves.

And as they were wont to exchange the pottery of Athens for the ivory of Africa, and live Jews for the gold and jewels of the Greeks, so they bartered salt, earthenware and brazen trinkets with the Britons for tin, lead, and the skins of wild beasts.

It was the policy of the Phœnicians (in which they were afterwards imitated by the Dutch) to preserve their commercial secrets with the greatest jealousy, and to resort to extremes in order to protect their interests. Although they had supplied tin and amber for several years to the Greeks, Herodotus, who had visited Tyre, could only obtain very vague accounts as to the countries from which they had been obtained, and on making inquiries respecting cinnamon and frankincense, was explicitly informed that the first was procured by stratagem from the nests of birds built upon inaccessible crags, and the latter from a tree guarded by winged serpents.

There is also the story of the master of a Phœnician trader from Cadiz to the Cassiterides, who finding himself followed by a Roman ship ran his own vessel ashore preferring death to discovery. The Romans were also shipwrecked, and were drowned, but the patriot escaped to tell his tale at Tyre, and to receive from a grateful state the value of his cargo and an additional reward.

In spite of these precautions, either by accident, or by the treachery of some renegade Phœnician, or from the colony of Phocians at Marseilles, the Greeks discovered the secret about three hundred years before the Christian era.

Thus monopoly being ended, the commerce of the Britons was extended. and improved, and after the descent of the Romans they exported not only tin and lead, but

also gold, silver, iron, corn, cattle, slaves hunting-dogs, pearls, and those wicker baskets which Martial has immortalized in his epigrams.

It also appears that chalk was an article of their trade, by this inscription which was found with many others near Zeland, A. D. 1647-

DEAE NEHALENNIAE
OB MERCES RECTE CONSER
VATAS SECVND SILVANVS
NEGO X TOR CRETARIVS
BRITANNICIANUS
V. S. L. M.

To the Goddess Nehalennia
For his goods well preserved
Secundus Silvanus
A chalk merchant
Of Britain
Willingly performed his merited vow.

Before describing the religion and superstitions of our earliest ancestors, which will bring me to the real purpose of this book, I will add a few remarks upon their manners and peculiarities.

Curiosity, which is certainly the chief characteristic of all barbarous and semi-barbarous nations, was possessed by the Celts in so extraordinary a degree that they would compel travelers to stop, even against their wills, and make them tell some news, and deliver an opinion upon the current events of the day. They would also crowd round the merchants in towns with the same kind of inquiries.

But the great failing of these Celts was their hastiness and ferocity. Not content with pitched battles against their enemies abroad, they were always ready to fight duels with their friends at home. In fact, the end of a British feast was always the beginning of a fray; two warriors would rise and fight each other with such sang-froid that Athenœus wrote in astonishment, *Mortem pro joco habent*, "They turn death into a joke;" and it was from these spectacles that the Romans conceived and executed the idea of gladiatorial entertainments.

They feared nothing these brave men. They sang as they marched to battle, and perhaps to death. They shot arrows at the heavens when it thundered; they laughed as they saw their own hearts' blood gushing forth.

And yet they were plain and simple in their manners; open and generous, docile and grateful, strangers to low cunning and deceit, so hospitable that they hailed the arrival of each fresh guest with joy and festivities, so warm-hearted that they were never more pleased than when they could bestow a kindness.

Their code of morals, like those of civilized nations, had its little contradictions; they account it disgraceful to steal, but honorable to rob, and though they observed the strictest chastity, they did not blush to live promiscuously in communities of twelve.

This extraordinary custom induced Caesar to assert that they enjoyed each other's wives in common; but in this he is borne out by no other authorities, and, indeed, there are many instances of this kind among barbarous nations, who love, apparently, to hide their real purity with a gross and filthy enamel.

Richard of Circencester (probably alluding to Bath the *aquæ solis* of the ancients) mentions, however, some salt and warm springs used by the ancient Britons, from which were formed hot baths suited to all ages, with distinct places for the two sexes; a refinement which was unknown in Lacedæmon.

And Procopius writes:--

"So highly rated is chastity among these barbarians, that if even the bare mention of marriage occurs without its completion, the maiden seems to lose her fair fame."

Having thus briefly sketched the condition and employments of the early Britons--having proved that our ancestors were brave, and that their daughters were virtuous, I will now show you those wise and potent men of whom these poor barbarians were but the disciples and the slaves.

BOOK THE THIRD.

THE DRUIDS

I.

ORIGIN.

ALTHOUGH the term Druid is local, their religion was of deep root, and a distant origin. It was of equal antiquity with those of the Persian Magi, the Chaldees of Assyria, and the Brachmans of Hindostan.

It resembled them so closely in its sublime precepts, in its consoling promises, as to leave no doubt that these nations, living so widely apart, were all of the same stock and the same religion--that of Noah, and the children of men before the flood.

They worshipped but one God, and erected to him altars of earth, or unhewn stone, and prayed to him in the open air; and believed in a heaven, in a hell, and in the immortality of the soul.

It is strange that these offsprings of the patriarchs should also be corrupted from the same sources, and should thus still preserve a resemblance to one another in the minor tenets of their polluted creeds.

Those pupils of the Egyptian priests, the Phœnicians, or Canaanites, who had taught

the Israelites to sacrifice human beings, and to pass their children through the fire to Moloch, infused the same bloodthirsty precepts among the Druids. As the Indian wife was burnt upon her husband's pyre, so, on the corpses of the Celtic lords, were consumed their children, their slaves, and their horses.

And, like the other nations of antiquity, as I shall presently prove, the Druids worshipped the heavenly bodies, and also trees, and water, and mountains, and the signs of the serpent, the bull and the cross.

The doctrine of the transmigration of souls which formed a leading theory on the system of the Brachmans, of the Druids, and afterwards of the Pythagoreans was obtained, through the Phœnicians, from Egypt, the fatherland of heathen mythology.

It cannot be denied that they also honored inferior deities, to whom they gave the names of Hu and Ceridwen, Hesus Taranis, Belenus, Ogmios, and the attributes of Osiris and Isis (or Zeus and Venus) Bacchus, Mercury, Apollo, and Hercules.

From the sandy plains of Egypt to the icebergs of Scandinavia, the whole world has rung with the exploits of Hercules, that invincible god, who but appeared in the world to deliver mankind from monsters and from tyrants.

He -was really a Phœnician harokel, or merchant, an enterprising mariner, and the discoverer of the tin mines of the Cassiterides. He it was who first sailed through the Straits of Gibraltar, which, to this day, are called The Pillars of Hercules: who built the first ship: who discovered the mariner's compass, and the loadstone, or lapas Heractius.

It is gratifying to learn that his twelve labors were, in reality, twelve useful discoveries, and that he had not been deified for killing a wild beast and cleaning out stables.

As the Chaldeans, who were astronomers, made Hercules an astronomer; and as the Greeks and Romans, who were warriors, made him a hero of battles; so the Druids, who were orators, named him Ogmios, or the Power of Eloquence, and represented him as an old man followed by a multitude, whom he led by slender and almost invisible golden chains fastened from his lips to their ears.

As far as we can learn, however, the Druids paid honors, rather than adoration to their deities, as the Jews revered their arch-angels, but reserved their worship for Jehovah.

And, like the God of the Jews, of the Chaldees, of the Hindoos, and of the Christians, this Deity of the Druids had three attributes within himself, and each attribute was a god.

Let those learn who cavil at the mysterious doctrine of the Trinity, that it was not invented by the Christians, but only by them restored from times of the holiest antiquity into which it had descended from heaven itself.

Although the Druids performed idolatrous ceremonies to the stars, to the elements, to

hills, and to trees, there is a maxim still preserved among the Welsh mountaineers, which shows that in Britain the Supreme Being was never so thoroughly forgotten and degraded as he had been in those lands to which he first gave life.

It is one of those sublime expressions which can be but faintly rendered in a foreign language.

"Nid dim oxd duw: nid duw ond dim." God cannot be matter; what is not matter must be God."

V.

POWER.

THIS priesthood flourished in Gaul and in Britain, and in the islands which encircled them.

In whichever country they may first have struck root we at least know that the British Druids were the most famous, and that it was a custom in the time of Julius Cæsar for the Gallic students to cross the British channel to study in the seminaries of the sister island.

But by that time, Druidism had begun to wane in Gaul, and to be deprived of many of its privileges by the growing intelligence of the secular power.

It is generally acknowledged that there were no Druids in Germany, though Keysler has stoutly contested this belief and has cited an ancient tradition to the effect that they had Druidic colleges in the days of Hermio, a German Prince.

The learned Selden relates that some centuries ago in a monastery upon the borders of Vaitland, in Germany, were found six old statues which being exposed to view, Conradus Celtes, who was present, was of opinion that they were figures of ancient Druids. They were seven feet in height, bare-footed, their heads covered with a Greek hood, a scrip by their sides and a beard descending from their nostrils plaited out in two divisions to the middle; in their hands a book and a Diogenes staff five feet in length; their features stern and morose; their eyes lowered to the ground.

Such evidence is mere food for conjecture. Of the ancient German priests we only know that they resembled the Druids, and the medicine-men of the American aborigines in being doctors as well as priests.

The Druids possessed remarkable powers and immunities. Like the Levites, the Hebrews, and the Egyptian priests they were exempted from taxes and from military service. They also annually elected the magistrates of cities: they educated all children of whatever station, not permitting their parents to receive them till they were fourteen years of age. Thus the Druids were regarded as the real fathers of the people.

The Persian Magi were entrusted with the education of their sovereign; but in Britain the

kings were not only brought up by the Druids, but also relieved. by them of all but the odium and ceremonies of sovereignty.

These terrible priests formed the councils of the state, and declared peace or war as they pleased. The poor slave whom they seated on a throne, and whom they permitted to wear robes more gorgeous even than their own was surrounded, not by his noblemen, but by Druids. He was a prisoner in his court, and his jailors were inexorable, for they were priests.

There was a Chief Druid to advise him, a bard to sing to him, a sennechai, or chronicler, to register his action in the Greek character, and a physician to attend to his health, and to cure or kill him as the state required.

All the priests in Britain and all the physicians, all the judges and all the learned men, all the pleaders in courts of law and all the musicians belonged to the order of the Druids. It can easily be conceived then that their power was not only vast but absolute.

It may naturally excite surprise that a nation should remain so barbarous and illiterate as the Britons undoubtedly were, when ruled by an order of men so polished and so learned.

But these wise men of the West were no less learned in human hearts than in the triplet verses, and oral of their. fathers. They imbibed with eagerness the heathen rites of the Phœnician Cabiri, and studied to involve their doctrines and their ceremonies in the deepest mystery. They knew that it is almost impossible to bring women and the vulgar herd of mankind to piety and virtue by the unadorned dictates of reason. They knew the admiration which uneducated minds have always for those things which they cannot understand. They knew that to retain their own sway they must preserve these barren minds in their abject ignorance and superstition.

In all things, therefore, they endeavored to draw a line between themselves and the mass. In their habits, in their demeanor, in their very dress.

They wore long robes which descended to the heel, while that of others came only to the knee; their hair was short and their beards long, while the Britons wore but moustaches on their upper lips, and their hair generally long.

Instead of sandals they wore wooden shoes of a pentagonal shape, and carried in their hands a white wand called slatan drui' eachd, or magic wand, and certain mystical ornaments around their necks and upon their breasts.

It was seldom that anyone was found hardy enough to rebel against their power. For such was reserve a terrible punishment. It was called Excommunication.

Originating among the Hebrews, and descending from the Druids into the Roman Catholic Church. It was one of the most horrible that it is possible to conceive. At the

dead of night, the unhappy culprit was seized and dragged before a solemn tribunal, while torches, painted black, gave a ghastly light, and a low hymn, like a solemn murmur, was chanted as he approached.

Clad in a white robe, the Arch-Druid would rise, and before the assembly of brother-Druids and awestricken warriors would pronounce a curse, frightful as a death warrant, upon the trembling sinner. Then they would strip his feet, and he must walk with them bare for the remainder of his days; and would clothe him in black and mournful garments, which he must never change.

Then the poor wretch would wander through the woods, feeding on berries and the roots of trees, shunned by all as if he had been tainted by the plague, and looking to death as a salvation from such cruel miseries.

And when he died, none dared to weep for him; they buried him only that they might trample on his grave. Even after death, so sang the sacred bards, his torments were not ended; he was borne to those regions of eternal darkness, frost, and snow, which, infested with lions, wolves, and serpents, formed the Celtic hell, or Ifurin.

These Druids were despots; and yea they must have exercised their power wisely and temperately to have retained so long their dominion over a rude and warlike race.

There can be little doubt that their revenues were considerable, though we have no direct means of ascertaining this as a fact. However, we know that it was customary for a victorious army to offer up the chief of its spoils to the gods; that those who consulted the oracles did not attend them empty-handed, and that the sale of charms and medicinal herbs was a constant trade among them.

Although all comprehended under the one term DRUID, there were, in reality, three distinct sects comprised within the order.

First, the Druids or Derwydd, properly so called. These were the sublime and intellectual philosophers who directed the machineries of the state and the priesthood, and presided over the dark mysteries of the consecrated groves.

Their name was derived from derw (pronounced derroo) Celtic for oak, and ydd, a common termination of nouns in that language, equivalent to the or or er in governor, reader, &c., in ours.

The Bards or Bardd from Bar, a branch, or, the top.

It was their province to sing the praises of horses in the warrior's feasts, to chant the sacred hymns like the musician's among the Levites, and to register genealogies and historical events.

The Ovades or Ovydd, (derived from ov, raw, pure, and ydd, above explained) were the

noviciates, who, under the supervision of the Druids, studied the properties of nature, and offered up the sacrifices upon the altar.

Thus it appears that Derwydd, Bardd, and Ovydd, were emblematical names of the three orders of Druidism.

The Derwydd was the trunk and support of the whole; the Bardd the ramification from that trunk arranged in beautiful foliage; and the Ovydd was the young shoot, which, growing up, ensured a prospect of permanency to the sacred grove.

The whole body was ruled by an Arch-Druid elected by lot from those senior brethren who were the most learned and the best born.

At Llandan in Anglesea, there are still vestiges of Trér Dryw the Arch-Druid's mansion, Boadrudau the abode of the inferior ones, Bod-owyr the abode of the ovades, and Trér-Beirdd the hamlet of the bards.

Let us now consider these orders under their respective denominations-Derwydd, Bardd, Ovyd; and under their separate vocations, as philosophers musicians, and priests.

VI.

THE DERWYDD, OR PHILOSOPHERS.

DRUIDISM was a religion of philosophy; its high-priests were men of learning and science.

Under the head of the Ovydd, I shall describe their initiatory and sacrificial rites, and shall now merely consider their acquirements, as instructors, as mathematicians, as law-givers and as physicians.

Ammianus Marcellinus informs us that the Druids dwelt together in fraternities, and indeed it is scarcely possible that they could have lectured in almost every kind of philosophy and preserved their arcana from the vulgar, unless they had been accustomed to live in some kind of convent or college.

They were too wise, however, to immure themselves wholly in one corner of the land, where they would have exercised no more influence upon the nation than the Heads and Fellows of our present universities. While some lived the lives of hermits in caves and in hollow oaks within the dark recesses of the holy forests; while others lived peaceably in their college-home, teaching the bardic verses to children, to the young nobles, and to the students who came to them from a strange country across the sea, there were others who led an active and turbulent existence at court in the councils of the state and in the halls of nobles.

In Gaul, the chief seminaries of the Druids was in the country of the Carnutes between Chartres and Dreux, to which at one time scholars resorted in such numbers that they

were obliged to build other academies in various parts of the land, vestiges of which exist to this day, and of which the ancient College of Guienne is said to be one.

When their power began to totter in their own country, the young Druids resorted to Mona, now Anglesea, in which was the great British university, and in which there is a spot called Myrfyrion, the seat of studies.

The Druidic precepts were all in verses, which amounted to 20,000 in number, and which it was forbidden to write. Consequently a long course of preparatory study was required, and some spent so much as twenty years in a state of probation.

These verses were in rhyme, which the Druids invented to assist the memory, and in a triplet form from the veneration which was paid to the number three by all the nations of antiquity.

In this the Jews resembled the Druids, for although they had received the written law of Moses, there was a certain code of precept among them which was taught by mouth alone, and in which those who were the most learned were elevated to the Rabbi.

The mode of teaching by memory was also practised by the Egyptians and by Lycurgus, who esteemed it better to imprint his laws on the minds of the Spartan citizens than to engrave them upon tablets. So, too, were Numa's sacred writing buried with him by his orders, in compliance perhaps with the opinions of his friend Pythagoras who, as well as Socrates, left nothing behind him committed to writing.

It was Socrates, in fact, who compared written doctrines to pictures of animals which resemble life, but which when you question them can give you no reply.

But we who love the past have to lament this system. When Cambyses destroyed the temples of Egypt, when the disciples of Pythagoras died in the Meta-pontine tumults, all their mysteries and all their learning died with them.

So also the secrets of the Magi, the Orpheans and the Cabiri perished with their institutions, and it is owing to this law of the Druids that we have only the meagre evidence of ancient authors and the obscure emblems of the Welsh Bards, and the faint vestiges of their mighty monuments to teach us concerning the powers and direction of their philosophy.

There can be no doubt that they were profoundly learned. For ordinary purposes of writing, and in the keeping of their accounts on the Alexandrian method, they used the ancient Greek character of which Cadmus, a Phœnician, and Timagines, a Druid, were said to have been the inventors and to have imported into Greece.

This is a fac-simile of their alphabet as preserved in the Thesaurus Muratori. Vol IV. 2093.

Both in the universities of the Hebrews, which existed from the earliest times, and in those of the Brachmans it was not permitted to study philosophy and the sciences, except so far as they might assist the student in the perusal and comprehension of the sacred writings. But a more liberal system existed among the Druids, who were skilled in all the arts and in foreign languages.

For instance, there was Abaris, a Druid and a native of the Shetland Isles who traveled into Greece, where he formed a friendship with Pythagoras and where his learning, his politeness, his shrewdness, and expedition in business, and above all, the ease and elegance with which he spoke the Athenian tongue, and which (so said the orator Himerius) would have made one believe that he had been brought up in the academy or the Lyceum, created for him as great a sensation as that which was afterwards made by the admirable Crichton among the learned doctors of Paris.

It can easily be proved that the science of astronomy was not unknown to the Druids. One of their temples in the island of Lewis in the Hebrides, bears evident signs of their skill in the science. Every stone in the temple is placed astronomically. The circle consists of twelve equidistant obelisks denoting the twelve signs of the zodiac. The four cardinal points of the compass are marked by lines of obelisks running out from the circle, and at each point subdivided into four more. The range of obelisks from north, and exactly facing the south is double, being two parallel rows each consisting of nineteen stones. A large stone in the centre of the circle, thirteen feet high, and of the perfect shape of a ship's rudder would seem as a symbol of their knowledge of astronomy being made subservient to navigation, and the Celtic word for star, *ruth-iul*, "a-guide-to-direct-the-course," proves such to have been the case.

This is supposed to have been the winged temple which Erastosthenes says that Apollo had among the Hyperboreans--a name which the Greeks applied to all nations dwelling north of the Pillars of Hercules.

But what is still more extraordinary, Hecateus makes mention that the inhabitants of a certain Hyperborean island, little less than Sicily, and over against Celtiberia--a description answering exactly to that of Britain--could bring the moon so near them as to show the mountains and rocks, and other appearances upon its surface.

According to Strabo and Bochart, glass was a discovery of the Phoenicians and a staple commodity of their trade, but we have some ground for believing that our philosophers bestowed rather than borrowed this invention.

Pieces of glass and crystal have been found in the cairns, as if in honor to those who invented it; the process of vitrifying the very walls of their houses, which is still to be seen in the Highlands prove that they possessed the art in the gross; and the Gaelic name for glass is not of foreign but of Celtic extraction, being *glasine* and derived from *glas-theine*, glued or brightened by fire.

We have many wonderful proofs of the skill in mechanics. The *clacha-brath*, or

rocking-stones, were spherical stones of an enormous size, and were raised upon other flat stones into which they inserted a small prominence fitting the cavity so exactly, and so concealed by loose stones lying around it, that nobody could discern the artifice. Thus these globes were balanced so that the slightest touch would make them vibrate, while anything of greater weight pressing against the side of the cavity rendered them immovable.

In Iona, the last asylum of the Caledonian Druids, many of these clacha-brath (one of which is mentioned in Ptolemy Hephestion's History, Lib. iii. cap 3.) were to be found at the beginning of this century, and although the superstitious natives defaced them and turned them over into the sea, they considered it necessary to have something of the kind in their stead, and have substituted for them rough stone balls which they call by the same name.

In Stonehenge, too, we find an example of that oriental mechanism which is displayed so stupendously in the pyramids of Egypt. Here stones of thirty or forty tons that must have been a draught for a herd of oxen, have been carried the distance of sixteen computed miles and raised to a vast height, and placed in their beds with such ease that their very mortises were made to tally.

The temples of Abury in Wiltshire, and of Carnac in Brittany, though less perfect, are even more prodigious monuments of art.

It is scarcely to be wondered at that the Druids should be acquainted with the properties of gunpowder, since we know that it was used in the mysteries of Isis, in the temple of Delphi, and by the old Chinese philosophers.

Lucan in his description of a grove near Marseilles, writes:--"There is a report that the grove is often shaken and strangely moved, and that dreadful sounds are heard from its caverns; and that it is sometimes in a blaze without being consumed."

In Ossian's poem of Dargo the son of the Druid of Bet, similar phenomenon are mentioned, and while the Celtic word lightning is De'lanach, "the flash or flame of God," they had another word which expresses a flash that is quick and sudden as lightning--Druilanach, "the flame of the Druids."

It would have been fortunate for mankind had the monks of the middle ages displayed the wisdom of these ancient priests in concealing from fools and madmen so dangerous an art.

All such knowledge was carefully retained within the holy circle of their dark caves and forests and which the initiated were bound by a solemn oath never to reveal.

I will now consider the Druids of active life-the preachers, the law-givers, and the physicians.

On the seventh day, like the first patriarchs, they preached to the warriors and their wives from small round eminences, several of which yet remain in different parts of Britain.

Their doctrines were delivered with a surpassing eloquence and in triplet verses, many specimens which are to be found in the Welsh poetry but of which these two only have been preserved by the classical authors.

The first in Pomponius Mela.

"Ut forent ad bella meliores,
Æternas esse animas,
Vitamque alteram ad manes."

"To act bravely in war,
That souls are immortal,
And there is another life after death."

The second in Diogenes Laertius.

"To worship the Gods,
And to do no evil,
And to exercise fortitude."

Once every year a public assembly of the nation was held in Mona at the residence of the Arch-Druid, and there silence was no less rigidly imposed than in the councils of the Rabbi and the Brachmans. If any one interrupted the orator, a large piece of his robe was cut off--if after that he offended, he was punished with death. To enforce Punctuality, like the Cigonii of Pliny, they had the cruel custom of cutting to pieces the one who came last. Their laws, like their religious precepts, were at first esteemed too sacred to be committed to writing--the first written laws being those of Dyrnwal Moelmud, King of Britain, about 440 B. c. and called the Moelmutian laws; for these were substituted the Mercian code or the laws of Martia, Queen of England, which was afterwards adopted by King Alfred and translated by him into Saxon.

The Manksmen also ascribe to the Druids those excellent laws by which the Isle of Man has always been governed.

The Magistrates of Britain were but tools of the Druids, appointed by them and educated by them also; for it was a law in Britain that no one might hold office who had not been educated by the Druids.

The Druids held annual assizes in different parts of Britain (for instance at the monument called Long Meg and her Daughters in Cumberland and at the Valley of Stones in Cornwall) as Samuel visited Bethel and Gilgal once a year to dispense justice.

There they heard appeals from the minor courts, and investigated the more intricate cases, which sometimes they were obliged to settle by ordeal. The rocking-stones which I have just described, and the walking barefoot through a fire which they lighted on the summit of some holy hill and called Samb'in, or the fire of peace, were their two chief methods of testing the innocence of the criminal, and in which they were imitated by the less ingenious and perhaps less conscientious judges of later days.

For previous to the ordeal which they named Gabha Bheil, or "the trial of Beil," the Druids used every endeavor to discover the real merits of the case, in order that they might decide upon the verdict of Heaven--that is to say, which side of the stone they should press, or whether they should anoint his feet with that oil which the Hindoo priests use in their religious festivals, and which enables the barefoot to pass over the burning wood unscathed.

We may smile at another profanity of the Druids who constituted themselves judges not only of the body but of the soul.

But as Mohammed inspired his soldiers with sublime courage by promising Paradise to those who found a death-bed upon the corpses of their foes, so the very superstitions, the very frauds of these noble Druids tended to elevate the hearts of men towards their God, and to make them lead virtuous lives that they might merit the sweet fields of Fla'innis, the heaven of their tribe.

Never before since the world, has such vast power as the Druids possessed been wielded with such purity, such temperance, such discretion.

When a man died a platter of earth and salt was placed upon his breast, as is still the custom in Wales and in the North of Britain.

The earth an emblem of incorruptibility of the body--the salt an emblem of the incorruptibility of the soul.

A kind of court was then assembled round the corpse, and by the evidence of those with whom he had been best acquainted, it was decided with what funeral rites he should be honored.

If he had distinguished himself as a warrior, or as man of science, it was recorded in the death-song; a cairn or pile of sacred stones was raised over him, and his arms and tools or other symbols of his profession were buried with him.

If his life had been honorable, and if he had obeyed the three grand articles of religion, the bard sang his requiem on the harp, whose beautiful music alone was a pass-port to heaven.

It is a charming idea, is it not? The soul lingering for the first strain which might release it from the cold corpse, and mingle with its silent ascent to God.

Read how the heroes of Ossian longed for this funereal hymn without which their souls, pale and sad as those which haunted the banks of the Styx, were doomed to wander through the mists of some dreary fen.

When this hymn had been sung, the friends and relatives of the deceased made great rejoicings, and this it was that originated those sombre merry-makings so peculiar to the Scotch and Irish funerals.

In the philosophy of medicine, the Derwydd were no less skilled than in sciences and letters. They knew that by means of this divine art they would possess the hearts as well as the minds of men, and obtain not only the awe of the ignorant but also the love of those whose lives they had preserved.

Their sovereign remedy was the missoldine or mistletoe of the oak which, in Wales, still bears its ancient name of Oll-iach, or all-heal, with those of Pren-awr, the celestial tree, and Uchelwydd, the lofty shrub.

When the winter has come and the giant of the forest is deserted by its leaves and extends its withered arms to the sky, a divine hand sheds upon it from heaven a mysterious seed, and a delicate green plant sprouts from the bark, and thus is born while all around is dying and decayed.

We need not wonder that the mistletoe should be revered as a heaven-born plant, and as a type of God's promise and consolation to those who were fainting on death's threshold in the winter of old age.

When the new year approached, the Druids beset themselves to discover this plant upon an oak, on which tree it grows less frequently than upon the ash-crab or apple tree. Having succeeded, and as soon as the moon was six days old, they marched by night with great solemnity towards the spot, inviting all to join their procession with these words: The New Year is at hand: let us gather the mistletoe.

First marched the Ovades in their green sacrificial robes leading two milk-white bullocks. Next came the bards singing the praises of the Mighty Essence, in raiment blue as the heavens to which their hymn ascended. Then a herald clothed in white with two wings drooping down on each side of his head, and a branch of vervain in his hand encircled by two serpents. He was followed by three Derwydd--one of whom carried the sacrificial bread--another a vase of water--and the third a white wand. Lastly, the Arch-Druid, distinguished by the tuft or tassel to his cap, by the bands hanging from his throat, by the sceptre in his hand and by the golden crescent on his breast, surrounded by the whole body of the Derwydd and humbly followed by the noblest warriors of the land.

An altar of rough stones was erected under the oak, and the Arch-Druid, having sacramentally distributed the bread and wine, would climb the tree, cut the mistletoe

with a golden knife, wrap it in a pure white cloth, slay and sacrifice the bullocks, and pray to God to remove his curse from barren women, and to permit their medicines to serve as antidotes for poisons and charms from all misfortunes.

They used the mistletoe as an ingredient in almost all their medicines, and a powder was made from the berries for cases of sterility.

It is a strong purgative well suited to the lusty constitutions of the ancient Britons, but, like bleeding, too powerful a remedy for modern ailments.

With all the herbs which they used for medicine, there were certain mummeries to be observed while they were gathered, which however were not without their object-first in enhancing the faith of the vulgar by exciting their superstitions-and also in case of failure that the patient might be reproached for blundering instead of a physician.

The vervain was to be gathered at the rise of the dog-star, neither sun nor moon shining at the time; it was to be dug up with an iron instrument and to be waved aloft in the air, the left hand only being used.

The leaves, stalks and flowers were dried separately in the shade and were used for the bites of serpents, infused in wine.

The samulos which grew in damp places was to be gathered by a person fasting-without looking behind him-and with his left hand. It was laid into troughs and cisterns where cattle drank, and when bruised was a cure for various distempers.

The selago, a kind of hedge hyssop, was a charm as well as a medicine. He who gathered it was to be clothed in white-to bathe his feet in running water-to offer a sacrifice of bread and wine-and then with his right hand covered by the skirt of his robe, and with a brazen hook to dig it up by the roots and wrap it in a white cloth.

Prominent among the juggleries of the Druids, stands the serpent's egg--the ovus anguinum of Pliny--the glein neidr of the ancient Britons--the adderstone of modern folk-lore.

It was supposed to have been formed by a multitude of serpents close entwined together, and by the frothy saliva that proceeded from their throats. When it was made, it was raised up in the air by their combined hissing, and to render it efficacious it was to be caught in a clean white cloth before it could fall to the ground-for in Druidism that which touched the ground was polluted. He who performed this ingenious task was obliged to mount a swift horse, and to ride away at full speed pursued by the serpents from whom he was not safe till he had crossed a river.

The Druids tested its virtue by encasing it in gold, and throwing it into a river. If it swam against the stream it would render its possessor superior to his adversaries in all disputes, and obtain for him the friendship of great men.

The implicit belief placed in this fable is curiously exemplified by the fact of a Roman Knight of the Vocontii, while pleading his own cause in a law suit was discovered with one of these charms in his breast and was put to death upon the spot.

Their reverence for the serpent's egg has its origin in their mythology. Like the Phœnicians and Egyptians, they represented the creation by the figure of an egg coming out of a serpent's mouth, and it was doubtless the excessive credulity of the barbarians which tempted them to invent the above fable that they might obtain high prices for these amulets, many of which have been discovered in Druidic barrows, and are still to be met with in the Highlands, where a belief in their power has not yet subsided; for it is no uncommon thing when a distemper rages among men or beasts, for the Glass-physician to be sent for from as great a distance as fifty miles.

These eggs are made of some kind of glass or earth glazed over, and are sometimes blue, green, or white, and sometimes variegated with all these colors intermixed.

For mental disorders and some physical complaints they used to prescribe pilgrimages to certain wells, always situated at a distance from the patient, and the waters of which were to be drunk and bathed in. With these ablutions, sacred as those of the Musselmén, were mingled religious ceremonies with a view to remind them of the presence of that God who alone could relieve them from their infirmities. After reaching the wells, they bathed thrice-that mysterious number-and walked three times round the well, deis'iul, in the same direction as the course of the sun, also turning and bowing from East to West.

These journeys were generally performed before harvest, at which time the modern Arabs go through a series of severe purgings, and when English laborers, twenty years ago, used systematically to go to the market town to be bled.

The season of the year--the exercise--the mineral in the water--above all the strong faith of the patients effected so many real cures that in time it became a custom (still observed in Scotland with the well of Strathfillan and in many parts of Ireland) for all who were afflicted with any disorder to perform an annual pilgrimage to these holy wells.

Caithbaid, an Irish historian, speaks of the Druid Trosdan who discovered an antidote for poisoned arrows, and there are many instances on record of the medicinal triumphs of the Druids.

They were more anxious to prevent disease than to cure them, and issued many maxims relating to the care of the body, as wise as those which appertained to the soul were divine.

Of these I will give you one which should be written in letters of Gold.

Bi gu sugach geanmnaidh mocher' each.

"Cheerfulness, temperance and early rising.

VII.

THE BARDD, OR MUSICIANS.

AS there were musicians among the Levites, and priests among the Phœnicians who chanted bare-foot and in white surplices the sacred hymns, so there were bards among the Druids.

Who were divided into three classes.

I. The Fer-Laoi, or Hymnists, who sang the essence and immortality of the soul; the works of nature; the course of the celestial bodies; with the order and harmony of the spheres.

II. The Senachies who sang the fabulous histories of their ancestors in rude stanzas, and who with letters cut from the bark of trees inscribed passing events and became the historians of their nation.

The Fer-Dan who were accustomed to wander through the country, or to be numbered in the retinues of kings and nobles, who not only sang encomiums upon the great warriors of the age, but who wrote satires upon the prevailing vices, worthy of a Juvenal or a Horace.

I can best give the reader some idea of the style and power of their conceptions, by quoting some of their axioms which have descended to us traditionally.

They are in the form of Triads, of which the subjects are, language-fancy and invention-the design of poetry-the nature of just thinking-rules of arrangement-method of description--e.g.

The three qualifications of poetry--endowment of genius, judgment from experience, and happiness of mind.

The three foundations of judgment--bold design, frequent practice, and frequent mistakes.

The three foundations of learning--seeing much, studying much, and suffering much.

The three foundations of happiness--a suffering with contentment, a hope that it will come, and a belief that it will be.

The three foundations of thought--perspicuity, amplitude, and preciseness.

The three canons of perspicuity--the word that is necessary, the quantity that is necessary, and the manner that is necessary.

The three canons of amplitude--appropriate thought, variety of thought and requisite thought.

How full of wisdom and experience! what sublime ideas in a few brief words!

These poets were held in high honor by the Britons, for among a barbarous people musicians are angels who bring to them a language from the other world, and who alone can soften their iron hearts and fill their bold blue eyes with gentle tears.

There is an old British law commanding that all should be made freedmen of slaves who were of these three professions. A scholar learned. in the languages--a bard--or a smith. When once the smith had entered a smithy, or the scholar had been polled, or the bard had composed a song, they could never more be deprived of their freedom.

Their ordinary dress was brown, but in religious ceremonies they wore ecclesiastical ornaments called *Bardd-gwewll*, which was an azure robe with a cowl to it--a costume afterwards adopted by the lay monks of Bardsey Island (the burial-place of Myrddin or Merlin) and was by them called *Cyliau Duorn*, or black cowls; it was then borrowed by the Gauls and is still worn by the Capuchin friars.

Blue which is an emblem of the high heavens and the beautiful sea had always been a favorite color with the ancient Britons, and is still used as a toilet paint by the ladies of Egypt and Tartary. Blue rosettes are the insignia of our students in the twin universities, and for the old Welsh proverb. *Y gwer las ni chyll mói liu*, -True blue keeps its hue," one of our proverbial expressions may be traced.

The harp, or lyre, invented by the Celts had four or five strings, or thongs made of an ox's hide, and was usually played upon with a plectrum made of the jaw-bone of a goat. But we have reason to believe that it was the instrument invented by Tubal which formed the model of the Welsh harps.

Although the Greeks (whom the learned Egyptians nicknamed "children," and who were the most vain-glorious people upon the earth) claimed the harp as, an invention of their ancient poets, Juvenal in his third satire acknowledges that both the Romans and the Greeks received it from the Hebrews. This queen of instruments is hallowed to our remembrance by many passages in the Bible. It was from the harp that David before Saul drew such enchanting strains that the monarch's heart was melted and the dark frown left his brow. It was on their harps that the poor Jewish captives were desired to play, on their harps which swayed above them on the branches of the willow trees while the waters of Babylon sobbed past beneath their feet.

And it was the harp which St. John beheld in the white hands of the angels as they stood upon the sea of glass mingled with fire, singing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the lamb. The trunks of these harps were polished and in the shape of a heart; they were embraced between the breast and the arm; their strings

were of glossy hair. In Palestine they were made from the wood of the Cedars of Lebanon; in Britain of Pren-masarn, or the sycamore.

In their construction, the same mysterious regard was paid to the number three. Their shape was triangular; their strings were three in number, and their turning keys had three arms.

In later times the Irish, who believe that they are descended from David, obtained an European fame for their skill in the making of this instrument. Dante mentions the circumstance, and the harp is still a mint-mark upon Irish coin.

The Bards from what we can learn of them, neither debased their art to calumny nor to adulation, but were in every way as worthy of our admiration as those profound philosophers to whom alone they were inferior.

We learn that, (unlike the artists of later times) they were peculiarly temperate, and that in order to inure themselves to habits of abstinence they would have all kinds of delicacies spread out as if for a banquet, and upon which having feasted their eyes for some time they would order to be removed.

Also that they did their utmost to stay those civil wars which were the bane of Britain, and that often when two fierce armies had stood fronting each other in array of battle, their swords drawn, their spears pointing to the foe and waiting but for the signal from their chieftains to begin the conflict, the Bards had stepped in between and had touched their harps with such harmony, and so persuaded them with sweet thrilling verses, that suddenly, on either side soldiers had dropped their arms and forgotten the fierce resentment which had been raging in their breasts.

VIII.

THE OVADES, OR NOVICIATES.

IN writing of the Derwydd, or Philosophers, I have written also of the high priests, or magicians for magnus is but another name for priest, and in the Chinese and various hieroglyphical languages, the same sign represents a magician and a priest.

I have now to describe the lower order of sacrificers who, under the direction of their masters, slew the victims upon the altar, and poured out the sacramental wine.

The Ovades were usually dressed in white, while their sacerdotal robes were of green, an ancient emblem of innocence and youth, still retained in our language, but debased and vulgarized into slang.

They are generally represented with chaplets of oak-leaves on their brows, and their eyes modestly fixed on the ground.

Having been carefully trained in the Druidic seminaries, their memory being stored with the holy triads, and with the outward ceremonies of their religion, they were prepared for

initiation into the sublime mysteries of Druidism.

During a period of probation, the Ovade was closely watched; eyes, to him invisible, were ever upon him, noting his actions and his very looks, searching into his heart for its motive, and into his soul for its abilities.

He was then subjected to a trial so painful to the body, so terrible to the mind, that many lost their senses for ever, and others crawled back to the daylight pale and emaciated, as men who had grown old in prison.

These initiations took place in caves, one of which still exists in Denbighshire. We have also some reason to believe that the catacombs of Egypt and those artificial excavations which are to be found in many parts of Persia and Hindostan were constructed for the same purpose.

The Ovade received several wounds from a man who opposed his entrance with a drawn sword. He was then led blind-folded through the winding alleys of the cave which was also a labyrinth. This was intended to represent the toilsome wanderings of the soul in the mazes of ignorance and vice.

Presently the ground would begin to rock beneath his feet; strange sounds disturbed the midnight silence. Thunder crashed upon him like the fall of, an avalanche, flashes of green lightning flickered through the cave displaying to his view hideous spectres arrayed against the walls.

Then lighted only by these fearful fires a strange procession marched past him, and a hymn in honor of the Eternal Truth was solemnly chanted by unseen tongues.

Here the profounder mysteries commenced. He was admitted through the North Gate or that of Cancer, where he was forced to pass through a fierce fire. Thence he was hurried to the Southern Gate or that of Capricorn, where he was plunged into a flood, and from which he was only released when life was at its last gasp.

Then he was beaten with rods for two days, and buried up to his neck in snow.

This was the baptism of fire, of water, and of blood.

Now arrived on the verge of death, an icy chill seizes his limbs; a cold dew bathes his brow, his faculties fail him; his eyes close; he is about to faint, to expire, when a strain of music, sweet as the distant murmur of the holy brooks, consoling as an angel's voice, bids him to rise and to live for the honor of his God.

Two doors with a sound like the fluttering of wings are thrown open before him. A divine light bursts upon him, he sees plains shining with flowers open around him.

Then a golden serpent is placed in his bosom as a sign of his regeneration, and he is

adorned with a mystic zone upon which are engraved twelve mysterious signs; a tiara is placed upon his head; his form naked and shivering is clothed in a purple tunic studded with innumerable stars; a crozier is placed in his hand. He is a king; for he is initiated; for he is a Druid.

IX.

rites and ceremonies.

A RELATION of the duties of the Ovades as sacrificers will naturally lead us into a description of the ceremonies of the priesthood, of their altars, their temples and their objects of worship or veneration.

The clachan, or stone temples of the Druids were round like those of the Chinese, the primitive Greeks, the Jews, and their copyists the Templars. This shape was adopted because it was typical of eternity, and also of the solar light--the word circus being derived from the Phœnician cir or cur, the Sun.

Like those of the Thracians they were open at the roof, for the Druids deemed it impious to attempt to enclose within a house that God, whose shrine was the universe.

There were two celebrated temples of the Druids, Abury in Wiltshire, and Carnac in Brittany, which were built in the form of a serpent.

There is scarcely a spot in the world in which the serpent has not received the prayers and praises of men. At first an emblem of the sun's light and power, it is worshipped in lands where the sun is not recognized as a Deity, for instance on the coasts of Guinea where the negroes curse him every morning as he rises, because he scorches them at noon.

The winged serpent was a symbol of the Gods of Egypt, Phœnicia, China, Persia, and Hindostan. The Tartar princes still carry the image of a serpent upon a spear as their military standard. Almost all the Runic inscriptions found upon tombs are engraved upon the sculptured forms of serpents. In the temple of the Bona Dea, serpents were tamed and consecrated. In the mysteries of Bacchus, women used to carry serpents in their hands and twined around their brows, and with horrible screams cry, Eva! Eva! In the great temple of Mexico, the captives taken in war and sacrificed to the sun, had wooden collars in the shape of a serpent put round their necks. And water-snakes are to this day held sacred by the natives of the Friendly Isles.

It was not only worshipped as a symbol of light, of wisdom and of health, personified under the name of God, but also as an organ of divination. Serpents formed the instruments of the Egyptian enchanter, the fetich of the Hottentots, and the girdles of the medicine-men of the North American Indians. The Norwegians, too, of the present day, when hunting will often load their guns with serpents to make them fortunate.

The serpent must have obtained this world-wide worship from its beauty, and its wisdom. Subtle in heart beyond all the beasts of the field; rapid and mysterious in its

wary footless movements, to which the ancients were wont to resemble the aerial progress of the Gods; above all its eyes so bright, so lovely, so weird in their powers of fascinations, no wonder that it should excite the awe and admiration of superstitious barbarians.

And they believed it immortal, for every year they saw it cast its skin, wrinkled and withered with age, and when they tried to kill it they found that it retained life with miraculous pertinacity.

Finally it was the brazen serpent elevated upon a cross that Moses erected in the wilderness, and upon which all who gazes were saved from death; and it was this serpent which Jewish and Christian writers have agreed in asserting to be a type of the Messiah.

The cromleachs were the altars of the Druids, and were so called from a Hebrew word signifying, "to bow," and from the bowing of the worshippers who believed them to be guarded by spirits.

They were constructed of a large flat stone placed upon two rough pillars. These stones were always unhewn, for by the Druidic law it was ordained that no axe should touch the sacred stones, a precept which very strangely coincides with the Mosaic law. "Thou shall not build an altar of hewn stones." Exod. xx, 25.

These cromleachs were also sepulchres, as is testified by the number of urns and human bones that have been discovered beneath some few of them. It is probable that their clachan were used for the same purpose, as the Egyptian mummies were interred in the catacombs of the pyramids, and as we bury bodies in the vaults of our churches.

We generally find them situated on hills or mountains, which prove that the Druids entertained the same reverence for high places as the nations of the East, and even the Scandinavians, for we read in the Erybygga-Saga that when Thoralf established his colony in the promontory of Thorsness in Iceland he erected an eminence called Helgafels, the Holy Mount, upon which none might look till they had made their ablutions under pain of death.

And sometimes by the side of a lake or running stream, for water was held holy by the Druids, and they were even wont to propitiate its deities, by offering it presents.

There was a Druidic temple at Toulouse, on the borders of a lake into which the Druids threw large quantities of gold, and in which Capion, a Roman knight, and his followers miserably perished in an attempt to recover it. So, Aurum Tolosanum, "Gold from Toulouse," became a bye-word among the Romans to express any accident or misfortune.

In the islands surrounding Britain and Gaul, especially in the Channel Islands where they are called Pouquelays, these altars are very common. Islands were held sacred for

some reason by the ancients.

They were often erected within the recesses of the sacred grove beneath the shadow of an oak.

This, the fairest and strongest of trees has been revered as a symbol of God by almost all the nations of heathendom, and by the Jewish Patriarchs.

It was underneath the oaks of Mamre that Abraham dwelt a long time, and where he erected an altar to God, and where he received the three angels.

It was underneath an oak that Jacob hid the idols of his children, for oaks were held sacred and inviolable. (Judges II. 5. 6.)

From the Scriptures, too, we learn that it was worshipped by the Pagans who corrupted the Hebrews (Hosea. IV. v. 13. Ezekiah VI. 13. Isaiah I. v. 29.)

Homer mentions people entering into compacts under oaks as places of security. The Grecians had their vocal oaks at Dodona. The Arcadians believed that stirring the waters of a fountain with an oaken bough would bring rain. The Sclavonians worshipped oaks which they enclosed in a consecrated court.

The Romans consecrated the oak to Jupiter their Supreme God, as they consecrated the myrtle to Venus, the laurel to Apollo, the pine to Cybele, the poplar to Hercules, wheat-ears to Ceres, the olive to Minerva, fruits to Pomona, rose-trees to the river nymphs, and hay to poor Vertumnus whose power and merits could obtain him nothing better.

The Hindoos who had no oaks revered the Banian tree.

When an oak died, the Druids stripped off its bark, &c., shaped it reverently into the form of a pillar, a pyramid, or a cross, and still continued to worship it as an emblem of their God.

Besides the clanchan and cromleach there are many stone monuments remaining in various parts of Gaul and Britain, which bear the. Druid stamp in their rudeness and simplicity.

These were sometimes trophies of victory, sometimes memorials of gratitude, sometimes images of God.

When erected they were anointed with rose-oil, as Jacob anointed the first stone monument on record -that which he raised at Bethel in memory of his dream.

The custom of raising plain stone pillars for idolatrous purposes was afterwards adopted by the Pagans and forbidden by the Mosaic law (Lev. XXVI. 1.)

Mercury, Apollo, Neptune and Hercules were worshipped under the form of a square stone. A large black stone was the emblem of Buddha among the Hindoos, and of Manah Theus-Ceres in Arabia. The Paphians worshipped their Venus under the form of a white pyramid, the Thebans their Bacchus under that of a pillar, the Scandinavians their Odin under that of a cube, the Siamese their Sommonacodum under that of a black pyramid.

And in the temple of the Sun at Cuzco, in Peru, was a stone column in the shape of a cone, which was worshipped as an emblem of the Deity.

Every one has heard of the Stone of Memnon in Egypt, which was said to speak at sun-rise, and the remains of which are covered with inscriptions by Greek and Latin travelers bearing testimony to the fact.

There is a story in Giraldus Cambrensis which proves that the Druids had the same superstition. In his time, a large flat stone ten feet long, six feet wide, and one foot thick served as a bridge over the river Alun at St. David's, in Pembrokeshire. It was called in British Lech Larar, "the speaking stone," and it was a tradition that if a dead body was carried over the stone it would speak, and that with the struggle of the voice it would crack in the middle, and that then the chink would close.

Keysler informs us that the Northern nations believed their stone deities to be inhabited by fairies or demons, and adduces an instance from the Holmveria Saga of Norway.

"Indridus going out of his house lay in wait for his enemy Thorstenus, who was wont to go to the temple of his God at such a particular time. Thorstenus came and, entering the temple before sun-rise, prostrated himself before the stone-deity and offered his devotion. Indridus standing by heard the stone speak, and pronounce Thorstenus' doom in these words:

Tu huc
Ultima vice
Morti vicinis pedibus
Terram calcasti;
Certè enim antequam
Sol splendeat,
Animosus Indridus
Odium tibi rependet.

Heedless of thy approaching fate
Thou treadst this holy ground;
Last step of life! thy guilty breast
Ere Phcebus gilds the ruddy East,
 Must expiate
 Thy murderous hate

Deep piere'd with crimson wound.

To fire, also, as an emblem of the sun, the Druids paid peculiar reverence.

Indeed fire would appear to have been the chosen element of God. In the form of a flaming bush He appeared to Moses. On Mount Sinai His presence was denoted by torrents of flame, and in the form of fire he preceded the little band of Israelites by night, through the dreary wilderness, which is perhaps the origin of the custom of the Arabians who always carry fire in front of their caravans.

All the great nations had their holy fires which were never suffered to die. In the temple of the Gaditanian Hercules at Tyre, in the Temple of Vesta at Rome, among the Brachmans, the Jews, and the Persians were these immortal fires which might not be desecrated by the breath of men, and which might be fed with peeled wood alone. So also the American savages when they have gained a victory, would light fires and dance round them.

The Druids thus conducted their worship of the holy element. Having stripped the bark off dry wood they poured oil of roses upon it, and lighted it by rubbing sticks together, which is said to have been an invention of the Phœnicians.

To this they prayed at certain times, and whoever dared to blow the fire with his mouth, or to throw dirt or dead beasts into it they punished with death.

They had circular temples consecrated to their never-dying fires; into these the priests entered every day, and reverently fed the fire and prayed to it for a whole hour, holding branches of vervain in their hands and crowned with tiaras which hung down in flaps on each side of their faces covering their cheeks and lips.

They also kindled the Beltein, or fire of the rock on May-eve to welcome the sun after his travels behind the clouds and tempests of the dark months. On that night all other fires were extinguished, and all repaired to the holy mount to pay their annual tribute to the Druids.

Then were held solemn rites, and men and beasts, and even goblets of wine were passed through the purifying flames. After which the fires were all relighted, (each from the sacred fire) and general festivity prevailed.

In Cornwall there are Karn-Gollowa, the Cairn of Lights, and Karn-Leskyz, the Cairn of Burnings which names proves that the fiendish rites of Moloch and Baal were really observed with all their impious cruelty in the island of Britain.

From these same blood-thirsty Phœnicians who had taught the Israelites to sin, the Druids learnt to pollute their altars with human blood, and to assert that nothing was so pleasing to God as the murder of a man.

In the golden age, men's hearts softened and elevated by gratitude towards their Maker offered him the choicest herbs and the sweetest flowers of the soil.

But in the age of iron, when men had learnt to tremble at their own thoughts, to know that they were thieves, and liars, and murderers, they felt that there was need of expiation.

To appease the God whom they still believed to be merciful, they offered Him Blood.

They offered Him the blood of animals.

And then they offered Him the most innocent and beautiful of His creations--beautiful virgins and chaste youths--their eldest sons, their youngest daughters.

Do you disbelieve me? read as I have read all the great writers of the past, and then you will shudder as I have shuddered at such terrible wickedness in man.

Read Manetho, Sanchionatho, Herodotus, Pausanias, Josephus, Philo the Jew, Diodorus of Sicily, Strabo, Cicero, Cæsar, Macrobius, Pliny, Titus Livius, Lucan, and most of the Greek and Latin-poets.

Read the books of Leviticus, Deuteronomy, the judges, Kings, the 105th Psalm, the Prophecies of Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and many of the old fathers, and there you will find that the Egyptians, the Israelites, the Arabs, the Cathaginians, the Athenians, Spartans and Ionians, the Romans, the Scythians, the Albanians, the Germans, Iberians and Gauls had adopted this cruel custom, which like the practice of magic had risen in Phœnicia, and had spread like a plague over the whole world.

The Egyptians sacrificed every year a young and beautiful virgin, whom arrayed in rich robes, they flung into the Nile. They also offered up men with red hair at the shrine of Osiris.

The Spartans whipped boys to death in sight of their parents before starting upon an expedition. The natives of the Tauric Chersonesus hospitably sacrificed to Diana all the strangers whom chance threw upon their coast. The Cimbri ripped their victims open, and divined from their smoking entrails. The Norwegians used to beat their brains out with an axe, the Icelanders by dashing them against a stone. The Scythians cut off the shoulder and arm, and flinging them in the air drew omens from the manner in which they fell upon the pile. The Romans and Persians buried them alive.

This mania for blood was universal. Even Themistocles, the deliverer of Greece, had once sacrificed three youths.

The ancient Peruvians, when one of their nation was dangerously ill, sacrificed his eldest son or youngest daughter to the solar deity, entreating him to spare the father's life. And periodically at their religious festivals they murdered children and virgins,

drowning them and then sacrificing them.

And the ancient Mexicans forced their victims to lie down upon a pyramidal stone, and tearing out their hearts, lifted them smoking towards the sun.

I might continue this long and disgusting catalogue of religious crimes, but let us return to the Druids, who at least only sacrificed human beings in some great and peculiar crisis.

The word sacrifice means an offering of the cake, and there can be no doubt that those thin broad cakes of the ancient Britons, which, with a libation of flour, milk, eggs, and herbs, or milk, dew and acorns are still superstitiously offered in the north of Britain, formed the usual sacrifice.

They also offered the boar, and it is not improbable that the hare, hen and goose which they were forbidden to eat, but which Cæsar informs us that they reared *causa voluptatis*, were used for sacrificial purposes.

The human victims were selected from criminals or prisoners of war. In lack of these they were chosen by lot, and it sometimes happened that Curtius-like they offered themselves up for their country.

Such a one was led into a sacred forest watered by running streams. In the centre, a circular space surrounded by grey and gigantic stones. Then the birds ceased to sing, the wind was hushed; and the trees around extended their spectral arms which were soon to be sprinkled with human blood.

Then the victim would sing the Song of Death.

The Druid would approach, arrayed in his judicial robes. He was dressed in white; the serpent's egg encased in gold was on his bosom; round his neck was the collar of judgment which would strangle him who delivered an unjust sentence; on his finger was the ring of divination; in his hand was a glittering blade.

They would crown the victim with oak leaves in sombre mockery. They would scatter branches of the oak upon the altar.

The voices of the blue-robed Bards would chant a solemn dirge, their harps would tone forth sinister notes.

Pale and stern the Druid would approach, his knife uplifted in the air.

He would stab him in the back. With mournful music on his lips he would fall weltering in blood, and in the throes of death.

The diviners would draw round, and would calmly augur from his struggles.

After which, fresh oak-leaves would be cast upon the blood-polluted altar, and a death feast would be held near the corpse of the sacrificed.

X.

PRIESTESSES.

THE Druids had many rites of divination--from the entrails of their victims--from the flight of birds--from the waves of the sea--from the bubbling of wells--and from the neighing of white horses.

By the number of criminals causes in the year they formed an estimate of the scarcity or plenty of the year to come.

They also used divining rods, which they cut in the shape of twigs from an apple tree which bore fruit, and having distinguished them from each other by certain marks, threw them promiscuously upon a white garment. Then the Diviner would take up each billet or stick three times, and draw an interpretation from the marks before imprinted on them.

The ordering of these divinations were usually placed in the hands of women who formed an order of Sibylls among these ancient prophets.

It has been the belief of every age that women are more frequently blessed with the gifts of inspiration, and that the mists of the future hang less darkly before their eyes than before those of men.

And thus it was that women were admitted to those holy privileges which none others could obtain except with the learning and struggles of a lifetime, thus it was that even the commonest women was admitted to that shrine from which the boldest warriors were excluded.

There is, however, a tradition that at one period both in Gaul and Britain, the women were supreme, that they ruled the councils of state, that they led the armies of war. That the Druids by degrees supplanted them, and obtained the power for themselves. But to propitiate these women who had the blood of Albina in their veins, they admitted them into their order, and gave them the title of Druidesses.

They were eventually formed into three classes.

I. Those who performed the servile offices about the temple, and the persons of the Druids, and who were not separated from their families.

II. Those who assisted the Druids in their religious services, and who, though separated from their husbands, were permitted to visit them occasionally.

III. A mysterious sisterhood who dwelt in strict chastity and seclusion, and who formed

the oracles of Britain.

Such is the origin of Christian mummeries. In all important events the Britons repaired to their dwelling. Not even a marriage was consummated among them without consulting the Druidess, and her purin, the seic seona of the Irish, viz., five stones thrown up and caught on the back of the hand, and from which she divined.

There are several instances recorded in classical history of predictions from these priestesses which came true.

Alexander Severus had just set out upon an expedition when he was met by a Druidess, "Go on, my Lord," she said aloud to him as he passed, "but beware of your soldiers."

He was assassinated by his soldiers in that same campaign.

My next example is still more peculiar. When Dioclesian was a private soldier he had a Druidess for hostess, who found him every day reckoning up his accounts with a military exactitude to which the army in those days was a stranger.

"You are niggardly," she said.

"Yes," he answered, "but when I become an Emperor I will be generous."

"You have said no jest," replied the priestess, for you will be Emperor when you have killed a wild boar--cum aprum occideris."

In our language this prophecy loses its point, for there is a play upon the Latin word which cannot be translated. Aper means both the name of a man and a wild beast, and thus the prediction was wrapped in that wise ambiguity which has been the characteristic of all human prophecy.

Dioclesian, whose ambition gave him faith, was much perplexed with the double meaning of the word, but hunted assiduously till he had killed so many wild boars, that he began to fear he had taken the word in its wrong acceptance.

So he slew Aper, his stepfather, the assassin of Numerianus, and shortly afterwards sat upon the imperial throne.

In marble, as well as in ink, there are memorials of the sect of Druidesses. The following inscription was discovered at Metz in Normandy:

SILVANO
SACR
ET NYMPHIS LOCI
APETE DRUIS
ANTISTITA

SOMNO MONITA.

Of Druidic oracles we know only of one at Kildare in Ireland; of one at Toulouse which ceased when Christianity was introduced there by St. Saturnins; of one at Polignac dedicated to Apollo, or Belenus, or Baal; and most celebrated of all that in the island of Sena (now Sain) at the mouth of the River Loire.

This island was inhabited by seven young women who were beautiful as angels, and furious as demons.

They were married but their husbands might never visit them. The foot of man was not permitted to set foot upon their isle.

When the mantle of night had begun to descend upon the earth, seven dusky forms might be seen gliding to the shore, and springing into their wicker boats, which were covered with the skins of beasts, would row across to the main-land, and fondle with their husbands, and smile upon them as if with the sweet innocence of youth.

But when the streaks of light began to glimmer in the East, like restless spirits summoned back to their daylight prison, strange fires would gleam from their eyes, and they would tear themselves from their husband's arms.

To them came the sailors who fished and traded on the seas, and entreated them for fair winds. But as they came and as they spoke, they shuddered at the sight of these women whose faces were distorted by inspiration, whose voices seemed to be full of blood.

When Christianity began to prevail in the north, it was believed that these women, by culling certain herbs at various periods of the moon, transformed themselves into winged and raging beasts, and attacking such as were baptized and regenerated by the blood of Jesus Christ, killed them without the visible force of arms, opened their bodies, tore out their hearts and devoured them; then substituting wood or straw for the heart, made the bodies live on as before and returned through the clouds to their island-home.

It is certain that they devoted themselves chiefly to the service of the Moon, who was said to exercise a peculiar influence over storms and diseases-the first of which they pretended to predict, the latter to cure.

They worshipped her under the name of Kêd or Ceridwen, the northern name for the Egyptian Isis.

They consecrated a herb to her, called Belinuncia, in the poisonous sap of which they dipped their arrows to render them as deadly as those malignant rays of the moon, which can shed both death and madness upon men.

It was one of their rites to procure a virgin and to strip her naked, as an emblem of the

moon in an unclouded sky. Then they sought for the wondrous selago or golden herb. She who pressed it with her foot slept, and heard the language of animals. If she touched it with iron, the sky grew dark and a misfortune fell upon a world. When they had found it, the virgin traced a circle round it, and covering her hand in a white linen cloth which had never been before used, rooted it out with a point of her little finger--a symbol of the crescent moon. Then they washed it in a running spring, and having gathered green branches plunged into a river and splashed the virgin, who was thus supposed to resemble the moon clouded with vapors. When they retired, the virgin walked backwards that the moon might not return upon its path in the plain of the heavens.

They had another rite which procured them a name as infamous and as terrible as that of the Sirens of the South, who were really Canaanite priestesses that lured men to their island with melodious strains, and destroyed them as a sacrifice to their Gods.

They had a covered temple in imitation probably of the two magnificent buildings which the Greek colonists had erected at Massilia. This it was their custom annually to unroof, and to renew the covering before the sun set by their united labors.

And if any woman dropt or lost the burden that she was carrying, she was immediately torn to pieces by these savage creatures, who daubed their faces and their white bosoms with their victim's blood, and carried her limbs round the temple with wild and exulting yells.

It was this custom which founded the story told at Athens and at Rome, that in an island of the Northern seas there were virgins who devoted themselves to the service of Bacchus, and who celebrated orgies similar to those of Samothrace.

For in those plays, performed in honor of Dionusus, there was always a representation of a man torn limb from limb. And in the Island of Chios, as in Sena, this drama was enacted to the life.

BOOK THE FOURTH.

THE DESTRUCTION OF THE DRUIDS.

I.

THE DESTRUCTION OF THE DRUIDS.

ON the South coast of Britain the people were thronging by hundreds to the sea-shore. It was to see a vessel which was sailing past, and which had come from some strange country across the seas.

Its prow was adorned with a swan's head and neck made of bronze. Below the prow and projecting a little above the keel was a brazen beak, which was called the rostrum and which had been invented by the Tyrrhenian Pisœus for breaking the sides of the enemy's ships.

The stern was elevated and adorned with the figure of a God. There seated, they could

distinguish the prominent figure of a man who paddled a huge broad-bladed oar backwards and forwards in the water, and with which he appeared to guide the vessel.

There were two masts made of fire-wood from the forests of Scandinavia, and a triangular sail suspended from each, inflated by the wind.

The sides of this vessel presented an extraordinary sight. Three banks of rowers, raised above each other, were plying their oars which swung in leather thongs, and which surrounded the ship with creamy foam, and which dashed the transparent spray high in the air.

The Britons perched upon the rocks, or in their little wicker boats, continued to watch this ship till it had disappeared, and then returned to their homes to relate this incident to their wives with Celtic garrulity.

It remained to them an enigma, till they received intelligence from the merchants of the main that the ship was a Roman trireme, or war galley; that its commander was Caius Volusenus, and that he had been sent by Julius Cæsar the Divine, to explore the coasts of that country upon which he meditated an invasion.

In fact, it was this great general who, aspiring to outvie the conquests of Pompey, had determined to subdue this island of Britain, which was then only known to the world. by some vague and exaggerated reports of the ferocity of its inhabitants, the perils of its seas, the darkness of its sky, and the marvelous beauty of its pearls.

However, the remoteness of the country with the difficulty and danger of the enterprise were those obstacles which form the stepping-stones to greatness; while the precious stones and metals with which it was said to abound, served to excite the cupidity of his soldiers whose souls were less open to those glorious passions which elevated that of their commander.

The brigands and pirates (that is to say the invaders) of those days even, considered it necessary to invent a paltry excuse for some act of lawless oppression; and Cæsar before he attacked the freedom and properties of a nation, affirmed that it was in revenge for the assistance which a small tribe of Britons had rendered to his enemies the Gauls.

The Britons terrified by this report, sent ambassadors to Rome. Cæsar received them kindly, and sent Commius, a Roman to whom he had given land in Gaul, as his ambassador in return.

The Britons violated the law of nations and put Commius in prison. Cæsar invaded Britain.

Then the groves of the Druids resounded with the cries of victims, and blood flowed from the knife of the sacrificer. Then the huge image of a bull made of wicker-work was

erected, and filled with animals and men, was set on fire, while the drums and cymbals of the priests drowned those piteous cries which strange to say was thought ill-omened to bear.

Then the Bards who before had sung the blessings of peace, and who had parted armies in their fierce strife, sang the war-hymns of their ancestors, and fired every heart with fortitude and emulation.

On the 26th of August, in the year 55 B.C., at about ten o'clock in the forenoon, Cæsar reached the British coasts, where he found the hills covered with armed men.

He sailed along the coast till he came to that low sandy plain on which the town of Deal Dow stands. It was there that he intended to land, and there that the Britons, perceiving the prows of his vessels turned towards the shore, crowded with horse, foot and chariots to repel him.

The water was too shallow to admit of the galleys approaching close to land. The Romans had therefore to wade through the sea under a cloud of arrows, and fighting with waves as well as with men. Thus they were thrown into disorder, and the waters were reddened with their blood. But Cæsar had commanded the rowing-boats to approach, in which were erected slings with divers instruments of war, and which darted over the water like sharks springing to their prey.

The Britons had begun to yield, but were rallying their courage as they saw that the Romans were fearing those waves which bore past on their dark bosoms the corpses of their comrades. When the standard-bearer of the tenth legion invoked the gods and cried:--"Follow me, if you do not wish me to lose my standard among the foe; but if I lose my life, I shall have done my duty to Rome, and to my general."

The brave man sprang into the sea, with the brazen eagle held aloft, and his bright sword flashing in his hand. The whole legion followed him, and after a long contest obtained a victory which had the Romans possessed cavalry to pursue their routed enemy, would have been as sanguinary as it was glorious and decisive.

From that epoch indeed, Britain may be considered as a Roman state, and its after history as merely the history of its insurrections.

Under Julius Cæsar, the rebellion of Cassebilanus compelled him to make a second expedition against Britain.

Augustus threatened to invade their island if the Britons continued to refuse to pay taxes. Intimidated by his menaces, they sent ambassadors to Rome who implored the pardon of the Emperor, and brought him large gifts, and swore fealty to him in the temple of Mars.

The Britons broke their oath under the reign of Caligula, who made grand preparations

for an invasion of the island, but who preferred leading his army against the ocean which he had conquered in this manner.

Having drawn up all his men in battle array upon the seashore, he caused the balistas, or slings, and other instruments of war to be ranged before them; he then sailed in a war-galley some little distance into the sea, returned, ordered his trumpeters to sound the charge, and the soldiers to fill their helmets with the shells from the beach, which he stored as the trophies of a conquered enemy in the Capitol. Having commended the courage of his soldiers and rewarded them profusely, he erected a tower upon the spot as if to prevent the nation from forgetting that Cæsar was a madman.

This display of imbecility naturally strengthened the Britons in their resolution to pay no taxes, and to re-assert their freedom.

When Claudius Cæsar came to the throne, he determined (partly on the advice of Bericus, a British outlaw) to invade this rebellious state.

Aulus Plautius, was placed at the head of a large army, and after several fierce engagements returned to Rome where he was rewarded with an ovation.

Ostorius was sent to Britain in the same reign to quell an insurrection, and also returned successful, bringing with him Caractacus, its leader, as prisoner.

In the reign of the blood-thirsty Nero, Suetonius was appointed Governor of Britain. For two whole years he made war upon the refractory Britons with great success, subduing fresh tribes and establishing garrisons.

But he had long perceived that there was an influence working against him, which was all the more powerful because it was concealed. It was that of the Druids, who still possessed an extraordinary sway over the minds of British warriors, and who animated them with promises of paradise to the defence of their country and their homes.

He discovered that the chief stronghold of the craft was the island of Mona, now Anglesea. It was to Mona that the British chieftains resorted as an oracle, to learn their destinies and to receive the encouragements of those whom they revered. It was to Mona that the wounded were borne, and were placed under the gentle care of those physicians who knew the secret properties of all herbs and flowers. It was to Mona that the Derwydd, weary with warfare had withdrawn, and for which they had deserted their magnificent seat at Abury, and their circular temple in Salisbury plain.

This island is reported to have been one of the fortunate islands sung of by the Grecian poets, as the Elysian fields. It was watered by clear streams it was clothed with fair meadows like a soft green mantle; it was full of oaken groves sacred to the Gods, from which it was called Ynys Dewyll the dark and shadowy island.

It was in the year A.D. 61, that Suetonius resolved to invade this delicious retreat, and

to carry the sword into the palace of the Arch-Druid, into the seminary of the Bardic Muse.

He forded the narrow channel which divides the isle from the main-land with his cavalry, while his infantry crossed over in flat-bottomed boats, called scaphæ, and by which we learn that they landed near Llandan where there is a place called Pant yr yscraphie to this day.

As the Romans landed, they were petrified by the horrible sight which awaited them.

It was night, and the British army dusky and grim, stood arrayed against them. Women clad in dark and mournful garments, and carrying torches in their hands like the furies of hell, were running up and down the ranks uttering loud wailing cries, while the Druids kneeling before them with hands raised to heaven, made the air resound with frightful imprecations.

At some distance behind them, in the obscurity of a neighboring grove, twinkled innumerable fires.

In these the Roman prisoners were to be burnt alive.

At first, horror-struck, they remained motionless: it was only when their generals exhorted them not to fear a crowd of women and priests, and when a flight of arrows from the Britons assured them that they had really flesh and blood foes to contend with, that they could be brought to advance to the charge with their usual valor and precision.

That night the Druids were burnt in the flames which they themselves had lighted.

But there were many who escaped into the recesses of the sacred groves, or by boat to the neighboring isles. These only waited for an opportunity to excite the Britons to fresh struggles for their freedom, and such an opportunity was soon afforded.

Prasutagus, King of the Iceni, having died, left the half of his property to Cæsar and half to his daughters. This which had been done to obtain the favor of the Romans had an opposite effect. His kingdom and palace were plundered and destroyed, his daughters ravished, his queen beaten like a slave.

The Britons driven to despair by these outrages took arms under Boadicea, the widow of Prasutagus.

Then the image of victory which the Romans had erected, fell down without any apparent cause and backwards as if it would give place to its enemies. And certain women, distempered with fury, went singing by way of prophecy that destruction was at hand. And strange sounds were heard in the council house of the Romans, and their theatre echoed with hideous howlings, and a bleeding sword was seen in the sky, and a spectre in the arm of the sea, and the ocean was reddened as if with blood, and the

shape of men's bodies were left in the sand at the ebb of the tide.

The Britons won several battles, and cruelly massacred all the Romans that they took captive without distinction either of age or sex.

It was already sung by the Bards who accompanied the army with their three-stringed harps that Britain was free.

But Suetonius with his formidable fourteenth legion was as yet unconquered.

With ten thousand men he occupied a strong possession in a pass at the head of an open plain, with a thick wood behind for purposes of retreat and ambush.

Here were drawn up the Roman cavalry, armed after the Greek fashion with spears and bucklers, and the infantry in due order of battle--the velites with javelin and target--the hastati with their shields and Spanish swords, and coats of mail--and the triarii with their pikes.

The British army numbered 230,000 men, which was divided into their infantry, their cavalry, and their war-chariots. The infantry also was divided into three nations, which were subdivided into family tribes resembling the Highland clans.

Those of the South were habited like the Belgic Gauls in woolen tunics thickly woven with coarse harsh wool; their legs and thighs covered with close garments, called Brachæ. They wore also helmets of brass, adorned with figures of birds or beasts rudely carved; iron breastplates, protruding with hooks; a long sword hanging obliquely across their thighs; a shield ornamented with figures; and a huge dart whose shaft was of iron, a cubit in length and as broad as two hands put together.

The inland nations were clothed in the skins of beasts and armed with spears and bucklers.

The Caledonians went naked, armed only with long broad pointless swords, and short spears with round balls of brass at the end, with which they used to make a noise before battle to frighten the horses of the enemy.

These Northern nations were of all the most resolute and troublesome enemies of Rome; for they could sleep on bogs covered with water, and live upon the barks and roots of trees, and possessed a peculiar kind of meat, a morsel of which no larger than a bean could protect them for days from hunger and thirst.

The cavalry were mounted upon small but hardy and mettlesome horses, which they managed with great dexterity. Their arms were the same as those of the infantry, for they would often dismount from their horses and fight on foot.

Their war-chariots were adorned with beautiful carvings, and were guided by the flower

of the nobility. They were furnished with enormous hooks and scythes, which spread death around as they were driven at terrific speed through the ranks of the foe.

The plain was surrounded by carts and wagons in which, according to the Celtic custom, were placed the wives and daughters of the warriors who animated them with their cries, and who tended the wounded that were brought to them from the field of blood.

In the midst of this army there was a woman standing in a chariot, clothed in a mantle, with a gold chain round her neck, her face grave and stern, her yellow hair falling to the ground.

It was Queen Boadicea, who with her two daughters by her side, had come to die or to be revenged.

With a royal dignity sublime in its shamelessness she showed them her body covered with sore and ignoble stripes; with a trembling hand she pointed to her two daughters disgraced and defiled; with a loud and fierce voice she reminded them of their victories, and prayed to God to complete their work of vengeance.

"Ye Britons, she cried, are wont to fight under the conduct of a woman, but now I ask ye not to follow me because I am descended from illustrious ancestors, nor because my kingdom has been stolen from me. I ask ye to avenge me as a simple woman who has been whipped with rods, and whose daughters have been ravished before her eyes. These Romans are insatiable, they respect neither the age of our fathers, nor the virginity of our daughters. They tax our bodies; they tax our very corpses. And what are they? They are not men. They bathe in tepid water, live on dressed meats, drink undiluted wine, anoint themselves with spikenard and repose luxuriously. They are far inferior to us. Dread them not. They must have shade and shelter, pounded corn, wine and oil, or they perish. While to us every herb and root is food, every juice is oil, every stream wine, every tree a house. Come then, remember your past victories, remember the causes of this war, and you will understand that the day is come when you must either conquer or die. Such at least shall be a woman's lot; let those live who desire to remain slaves." So saying, she loosed a hare as an omen of victory from her bosom, and the Britons with wild shouts advanced upon their foe.

Suetonius cheered his veterans with a few emphatic words, and showed them with contempt the wild and disorderly multitude which poured confusedly towards them. He bid the trumpets sound and the troops advance.

Then arose a terrible struggle--a nation fighting for its freedom--an army fighting for its fame.

Alas! that sea of blood, that dreadful apparition, those figures in the sand were omens of Britain's downfall. Four-score thousand of its proudest warriors were slain; their wives and daughters were butchered, and Boadicea overcome with sorrow and disgrace,

destroyed herself with poison.

Thus ends the reign of the Druids; the priest-kings of the North. Thus they were stripped of their crowns, and their sceptres, and their regal robes, and compelled to fly to the islands of the Irish channel and the German Sea, where they dwelt in hollow oaks and in little round stone houses, many of which still remain and are held in reverence by the simple islanders.

In Gaul the work of destruction had been completed even prior to the time of Suetonius. This beautiful religion had been proscribed by Tiberius ostensibly because it permitted human sacrifices, really because it possessed a dangerous power. This prohibition had been afterwards enforced by Claudius, and the Druids were massacred by the Romans wherever they were to be found. The priestesses of Sena were burnt by one of the ancient Dukes of Brittany.

Yet it is difficult to subroot an ancient religion by imperial edicts. The minds of men though prone to novelty will frequently return fondly to their first faiths, as the hearts of maidens creep back to former and almost forgotten loves.

In the fifth century, Druidism sprang back to life under the mighty Merlin, whose prophecies became so famous throughout Gaul and Britain, and who forms so conspicuous a character in the Arthurian romances.

But these wee drops of the elixir vitæ, which could only animate the corpse for a brief space--which but gave vigor to the frame, and light to the eyes, as a lamp apparently extinguished will burst into flame ere it dies out for ever.

We find many decrees of Roman emperors, and canons of Christian councils in the sixth, seventh and eighth centuries against Druidism, and in the day of King Canute, the Dane, a law was made against the worship of the sun and moon, mountains, lakes, trees and rivers.

It is possible to discover many vestiges of the Druids and their religion in our times, and many peculiar analogies between their superstitions and those of other nations and of other priests.

Having related how this order of Priests emanated from the Patriarchs; how they received their idolatrous and ceremonial usages from the Phœnicians; how they obtained a supreme power in those two countries which ere now have struggled for the possession of the world; how they were attacked and annihilated by the Roman soldiers, I shall leap over a chasm of centuries, and trace their faint footsteps in our homes, in our churches and in our household words.

BOOK THE FIFTH.

VESTIGES OF DRUIDISM.

I.

IN THE CEREMONIES OF THE CHURCH OF ROME.

THERE is no religion so pure and simple, and yet so mystic and divine as the religion of the Christians. What need is there of arguments to prove that it is derived from heaven, for what mortal mind could have conceived so grand and touching a principle, as that of a God who filled with love and pity could descend from His throne of bliss and honor to save from destruction this one poor star, this one faint mote in the vastness of His firmament.

To twelve men the dear Jesus left his precepts and commands. From the children of these men and of their disciples sprang a noble flock who, like their great Master, suffered harsh words and cruel torments, and death itself in a holy cause.

When God rewarded them by shedding peace upon the church from without, dissensions from within played Satan's work with her chastity and her love. Swords were then drawn for the first time by Christians against each other--swords which never thence till now have been for a moment sheathed. The Christian religion is divided into three established churches, the Church of Rome, the Church of Greece, and the Church of England. Besides these, there are sects whose origins have been abuse upon the one hand, and ambition upon the other hand, and whose very titles it would occupy pages to enumerate.

Between the vulgar members of these three churches burns a heathenish and diabolical hatred. Its root is jealousy. Each church affects to be the only ladder to heaven, and damns all such souls as refuse to ascend by them.

They are barbarians and place themselves in the same scale with the tribe of the Cherokee Indians, who firmly believe that the Black Hawks will not be admitted to the pleasures of the happy hunting grounds because they are not Cherokees.

Between the doctrines and ceremonies of the Greek and Romish Churches, there are but a few delicate and unimportant distinctions. Yet the Patriarch of the Church, every Holy Thursday, solemnly excommunicates the Pope and all his followers.

The Church of England, and the Church of Rome worship the same Christ. Between these two churches, as between two armies, is waged a scandalous, vituperative war, and each fresh convert is a battle won.

The Romish Church was sullied by many abuses, which authorized a schism and a separation among its members. Since many of those plague-spots still remain, it is right that this separation should continue. But a dark and dangerous heresy has long been creeping silently into the heart of our religion, and converting its ministers into false vipers who, warmed and cherished by the bosom of this gentle church, use their increasing strength in darting black poison through all her veins.

They wish to transmit to our church those papist emblems and imagery, those ceremonies and customs which are harmless in themselves, but which by nourishing

superstition elevate the dangerous power of the priests.

We can at present be proud of our priesthood. They constitute a body of pious, honorable, hardworking men. It is because they can exercise no undue power. Give them supreme power, and they will be Neros who will fasten us with iron chains, and murder us if we disobey them.

The priesthood of the Druids stands almost alone in the history of the past. It was directed by men, with minds elevated by philosophy and learned in the human heart. But read the religious history of other nations, and you will discover how frightfully the power of the priests has been abused.

The priests invented a thousand Gods; the priests told a thousand lies; the priests instituted a thousand absurd and horrible customs. Who first taught nations to be idolaters, to be murderers but the priests. Who instituted the festival of the juggernaut, the Inquisition, the massacre of St. Bartholomew, but the priests.

Calvin, a priest of the Reformation, ordered his victims to be burnt with green wood--a truly Christian refinement of cruelty!

Aaron, a priest, manufactured a golden calf and taught the Jews to insult their God. And it was Caiaphas, a high priest, who committed that murder of which the more virtuous heathen Pilate washed his hands.

Look everywhere, look everywhere, and you will see the priests reeking with gore. They have converted popular and happy nations into deserts, and have made our beautiful world into a slaughter house drenched with blood and tears.

Englishmen! they are planting images, they are performing ceremonies in your houses of worship which you find it impossible to understand. They are hidden from your eyes by a dark veil; it is the veil of a Pagan goddess; it is the veil of Isis.

I would not raise this veil, and disclose the heathen origin of emblems and ceremonies which so many sanctify and revere, were it not to answer some good purpose.

I write then in the hope that the church may be preserved in its simplicity--and its priesthood in that honor and integrity which now, as a body, they possess to an extent unequalled in any instance that the priest-history of the past or the present can afford. It is indeed seldom that an English clergyman becomes a wolf clothed in lamb-skin, and preys upon his flock under words and looks of religion.

But we know that power presents temptations, which minds fortified only by three years education at a college are often unable to resist.

Before letters were invented, symbols were necessary to form a language; and it is still an argument of the Greek and Romish Churches that pictures and images are the

books of those who cannot read.

They say also that since man is not a disembodied spirit like the angels, it is also impossible that he can worship the Deity with his heart alone. And it cannot be denied that dim and shadowy lights, sweet perfumes, majestic processions and strains of music will elevate the soul towards God and prepare the mind to receive heavenly and sublime impressions.

Without objecting to the use of such aids to devotion, I wish to guard people from attaching a peculiar sanctity to the bare aids in themselves, which is nothing less than idolatry. This I can best prevent by showing them how they first came into a Christian Church. And in doing so, I shall depart little from the original design of this chapter which is to investigate the vestiges of Druidism in the ceremonies of the Roman Catholic Religion.

Not only the ceremonies, but also the officers and many of the doctrines of the Church of Rome may be traced to heathen sources.

The Pope of Rome exactly resembles the Secular High-Priest of ancient Rome, and in Latin his title is the same--Pontifex Maximus. The office was probably an imitation of that of the Arch-Druid, who, as I have described, had supreme power over secular as well as ecclesiastical affairs, and who was surrounded by a Senate of the Chief Druids, as the Pontifex Maximus was by Flamines, and the Pope by Cardinals.

The distinguishing sign of the flamen was a HAT; and "the cardinal's hat" is a European proverb.

The Arch-Druid held his foot to be kissed on certain occasions by the common people. Julius Cæsar who had observed this custom, on being made Pontifex Maximus, compelled Pompey to do the same; in this he was followed by Caligula and Heliogabalus, whom the Pope also has wisely imitated.

The tonsure of the Romish priests is the same as that of the priests of Isis whose heads were shaved, a practice forbidden by God: (Levit. xx. 1. Ezek xlv. 20).

Their celibacy is also heathenish. Origen when emasculated himself, only imitated the Hierophantes of Athens who drank an infusion of hemlock to render themselves impotent. St. Francis who, when tempted with carnality, would throw himself naked on the snow making balls which he applied to his body calling them his maid and his wife, did but copy Diogenes who lived in a tub--a cloak, his covering--a wallet, his kitchen--the palm of his hand, his bottle and cup; who in the searching heat of summer would lie naked on the hot gravel, and in the harshest frost would embrace stone statues covered with snow.

Plato, Pythagoras, Heraclitus, Democritus and Zeno, the prince of Stoics, imposed celibacy upon their disciples. The priests of Cybele, the Megabyzes of Ephesus and the

priests of Egypt maintained the vow of chastity. Eneas (*Æneid* lib vi.) in passing through the infernal regions saw no priests there but such as had passed their lives in celibacy.

It need not be proved that there were many hermits and orders of monks among the heathen. Even the begging friars of the Romish church are not original. There was a tribe of lazy mendicant priests among the heathens, against whom Cicero wrote in his *Book of Laws*, who used to travel from house to house with sacks on their backs, and which were gradually filled with eatables by the superstition of their hosts.

Pythagoras established an order of nuns over whom he placed his daughter. The Roman vestals were nuns who took a vow of chastity, and who, like Christian nuns that we have heard of, were punished with death if they disgraced it.

There was a sisterhood of Druidesses at Kildare in Ireland, whose office it was, like the Roman Vestals, to preserve a holy fire ever burning. They devoted themselves to the service of Brighit, the Goddess of Poetry, of Physics, and of Smiths, and who is spoken of in the old Irish MSS. as the Presiding Care. When Druidism was abolished, these priestesses became Christian nuns, and Brighit became St. Bridget, the tutelary saint of Ireland. The fire was still preserved in honor of this Christian saint, and though extinguished once by the Archbishop of London, was relighted and only finally extinguished at the suppression of the monasteries in the reign of King Henry the Eighth.

The dress and ornaments of the Romish priest are borrowed from the heathens. The Phœnician priests wore surplices. Lambskin was worn by the Persian priests. The pelt, which the canons wear with the fur outward, is a memorial of the custom of the early heathens, who having killed the beasts for sacrifice, flayed them and taking the skins put them over their head with the fur outwards. On the saccos, or episcopal garment of the Russian bishops are suspended small silver bells, which were also worn on the robes of the priests of Persia and of the High-Priest of the Jews.

The crosier, or pastoral staff of the Pope was also used by the Druids, and answers to the lituus of the Roman augurs and the hieralpha of the Hindoos.

The Arch-Druid wore bands precisely resembling those which the Romish and English clergy wear now, and which a short time ago the students of our universities were compelled to wear in their public examinations.

Votive offerings and pilgrimages are known by all to be of Pagan extraction.

The fasts, penances and self-tortures of the Romish priests find a parallel among the Yogees or Gymnosophists of India, who wandered about the world naked as they had been born, sometimes standing on one leg on the burning sands--passing weeks without nourishment, years without repose--exposed to the sun, to the rain, to the wind--standing with their arms crossed above their heads till the sinews shrank and their flesh withered away--fixing their eyes upon the burning sun till their moisture was

seared and their light extinguished.

When a Brahmin became a grandfather he gave up the management of his affairs to his son, and quitted the city for the desert, the company of men for eternal solitude. He dressed in the bark of trees; he was not permitted to wear linen nor to cut his nails. He bathed nine times a day; he read and meditated ever on the Holy Vedas. At night alone he slept, and then on the bare ground. In the summer months he sat in the full blaze of the sun, surrounded by four fires; in the four months of rain, he dwelt in a stage raised above the water by four poles but unroofed; during the four winter months he sat all night in the cold water.

And always performing the fast of Chanderayan.

Soon his spirits would sink, and tired of life he was allowed to commit suicide, which was considered the sure passport to heaven. Some burn themselves, some drowned themselves, some flung themselves from precipices, and some walked, walked, walked till they dropped down dead.

The fast of Chanderayan consisted in eating one mouthful a day, and increasing a mouthful every day for a month, and then decreasing a mouthful every day for the same length of time. A tribe of the Egyptian priests fasted perpetually, abstaining from eggs which they considered liquid meat, and from milk which they esteemed a kind of blood.

The members of the Greek Church are more scrupulous than those of Rome, for they will not eat eggs or fish when fasting.

The religious rites of the Romish Church are closely assimilated to those of the heathens.

In the Dibaradané or offering-of-fire, the officiating Brahmin always rang a small bell. Also the women-of-the-idol, the dancing girls of the Indian pagodas had golden bells attached to their feet.

The wax tapers which are constantly kept burning in Roman Catholic churches remind us of the practice of most of the ancient nations who preserved fires continually burning in their temples; for instance in the pagodas of the Brahmins; in the sanctuaries of Jupiter Ammon; in the Druidic temple at Kildare; in the Capitol at Rome; and in the temple of the Gaditanian Hercules at Tyre.

The Egyptians used lamps in the celebration of their religious services. They had one festival which they called The Feast of Lamps, which they used to celebrate by sailing down the Nile to the temple of Isis at Sais by torchlight. Those who were unable to attend, lighted the lamps, which were small cups filled with salt and oil, and a lighted wick floated within.

It is curious that this Pagan observance should be still preserved by the Papists. A few

years ago I was in the house of a Roman Catholic at vesper time. "I cannot attend vespers to-day," he said, "so I do this." And he fetched a glass saucer which was filled with oil, and lighted a wick which was floating in the midst. After some few minutes the light died out, "Now," said he, "vespers are over."

The Persians used a kind of holy water which was named zor. But it is needless to produce such instances. Water, as a principle of generation, and as one of the four elements was revered by all heathendom. The very aspersoire or sacred water-pot which the ancient Romans. used for their temple, may be found among the implements of their successors.

Their turnings and genuflexions are copied from the deisuls of the Druids. The Druidic religious dances which were performed in a circle, in imitation of the revolution of the heavenly bodies, are preserved to posterity by the cardinals who advance to the Pope in a circle, by the Turkish dervishes, and by the French and English peasantry in various rural dances.

The heathens were not without their liturgies.

The Persians used a long form of prayer for the ceremony of marriage, and the use of the ring on the third finger of the left hand was known to a the ancients as Tertullian himself admits. In the Greek Church of Russia the couple are crowned with garlands which are removed on the eighth day. This, an ancient Roman observance, is not a traditional superstition of the Russians, but a ceremony authorized by their religion, and a service in their liturgy. The veil which our brides wear is also a remnant of ancient Rome.

--Dudum sedet illa parato
Flammeolo.--Juv. Sat. X.

As is also the superstition among Papist that it is unlucky to marry in the month of May. Ovid records it in a distich.

Nec viduæ tœdis eadem nec virginis apta
Tempora. Quæ nupsit non diuturna fuit.
Hac quoque de causâ si te proverbia tangunt
Mense malas Maio nubere vulgus ait.

Our funeral practice of throwing three handfuls of earth on the coffin, and saying : earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust, was in use among the ancient Egyptians, and our mutes resemble the hired mourners of all the ancient nations.

The Vedas are full of exorcisms against those evil spirits which, as the Hindoos supposed, crowded about the sacrifice and impeded the religious rites. There are forms of exorcism used by Romish priests, and in the first liturgy of Edward VI, there was a form of exorcism in the baptismal service which since has been erased.

The Romans used to consecrate their temples, when first built, with prayers and sacrifices, and sprinklings of holy water.

The mass is acknowledged by the Catholic priests to be a sacrificial service, and the host made of wheat flour is an exact imitation of the consecrated cakes which were used by the heathens.

The ancient Persians carried their infants to the temple a few days after they were born, and presented them to the priest who stood before the holy fire in the presence of the burning sun. He took the child and plunged it into a vase full of water for the purification of its soul. After which it was anointed, received the sign of the cross, and was fed with milk and honey.

Such is the origin of infant baptism, of the font, and of the ceremony of signing the forehead with the figure of the cross--none of which are derived from God or from His Holy Scriptures.

When the child had arrived at the age of fifteen years, the priest invested him with the robe called Sudra and with the girdle, and initiated him into the mysteries of their religion.

This is plainly the same as the Christian confirmation, before which the church does not permit us to receive the sacrament.

We first hear of the sacramental offering of bread and wine as used by Melchisedek. I have described it among the ceremonies of Druidism. Among the Hebrews it was called qum whence our word "communion."

I have now to consider the great symbol of the Christian religion--the cross. Were it regarded as a mere emblem of our Lord's suffering I should be silent upon the matter; but since it is an object of actual idolatry in the Roman Catholic church, and threatens to become the same in our own, I must endeavor to correct the abuse by exposing its Pagan origin.

This cross which the Roman Catholics worship on Good Friday by taking off their shoes and approaching it on their knees, and reverently kissing it, was once as common a symbol among Pagans as the circle, the serpent or the bull.

In Ezekiel, IX. 4-6, we read that God directed the six destroyers to kill all whom they found in the city of Jerusalem, except those on whose forehead the Taw was inscribed. This letter Taw is the last in the Hebrew alphabet, and according to its ancient method of writing, exactly resembles a cross, as St. Jerome remarked 1400 years ago.

The crux ansata of the Egyptians, according to Ruffinus and Sozomen, was hieroglyphic, and imparted the time that was to come.

There was a phallic emblem in Egypt. Thereby also the Syrians and Phoenicians represented the planet Venus. On some of the early coins of the latter nation, we find the cross attached to a chaplet of beads placed in a circle so as to form a rosary, such as the Lamas of Thibet and China, the Hindoos and the Roman Catholics now tell over as they pray.

On a Phœnician medal discovered by Dr. Clarke in the ruins of Citium, are inscribed the cross, the rosary and the lamb.

were the monograms of Osiris, Venus and Jupiter Ammon.

of the Scandinavian Teutates or Tuisco.

The Vaishnavas of India mark one of their idols with crosses, thus and with triangles.

On the Egyptian monuments in the British Museum may be seen the mystic cross in great numbers of places, and upon the breast of one of the mummies in the Museum of the London University is a cross exactly in this shape.

The two principal pagodas of India, those of Benares and Mathura are built in the form of a cross. The Mexican temples are built in the form of a cross and face the four cardinal points.

Crosses have been discovered on the Scandinavian "Mark" stones in the Scottish Isles, and there are many ancient monuments in Great Britain which, but for the cross engraved upon them, would be considered Druidical.

That the Druids, like the aborigines of America and the ancient conjurers of Lapland, revered the form of the cross can hardly be doubted. Schedius de Mor. Germ. informs us that it was their custom to seek studiously for an oak tree large and handsome, growing up with two principal arms in the form of a cross beside the main stem. If the two horizontal arms were not sufficiently adapted to the figure, they fastened a cross beams to it. Then they consecrated it by cutting upon the right branch in fair characters the word Hesus, upon the middle stem, the word Taranis, upon the left branch Belenus, and over them the word Thaw.

The tree so inscribed, they would make their Kebla like the Jewish Jerusalem, the Turk's Mecca, and the Christian's altar to which they would direct their faces when they prayed.

I can best explain the adoration of this symbol by deriving it from that constellation The Southern Cross, which appears only in tropical skies and which perhaps the heathens, attracted by its beauty, learned to worship, as they worshipped the sun for its God like grandeur, and the moon for its beneficent light. The idolatry of the Roman Catholics is not confined to emblems. They have deified martyrs and other holy men, and render

them a worship that is only due to God.

It is true that they draw a distinction between the adoration which they pay to God, and the homage which they pay to Saints, calling the one in the language of the schools Latria, from worship due to God only, and the latter Dulia, from an inferior kind of worship. But this distinction is too delicate for the illiterate to understand.

A plurality of Gods I have shown to be one of the abuses of ancient heathenism. In this abuse, they have been imitated by the modern idolaters of Rome, not only in the abstract but in the concrete: there is not only assimilation, but a reproduction.

The Romans ridiculed the Gods of Egypt whom they themselves adored but under different names. They burnt Serapis, Anubis, and Isis; they revered Pluto, Mercury and Ceres.

So the Roman Catholics while pretending to abjure the Gods of heathenism have actually adopted many of them.

The petty divinities of the Pagans were deified men, and were intercessors with Osiris, Zeus or Jupiter, as the canonized saints of the Catholic Church are with the God of the Christians.

The Chaldees divided the year into twelve months with an angel over each month. The saints perform the same office in the Romish Calendar, and in several of the Greek churches there are twelve pictures for the twelve months representing the twelve principal saints.

The divi, or inferior Gods of the Romans worked miracles; altars were erected in their honor with lights continually burning before them; their relics were worshipped; convents were formed of religious men and women who took the name of divus or inferior God, to whom they devoted themselves, such as the Quirinals from Quirinus or Romulus; the Martiales from Mars; the Vulcanates from Vulcan. So also the Augustines from Augustine; the Franciscans from Francis; the Dominicans from Dominic.

The Roman divi were tutelary Gods over various vocations--as Neptune over mariners--Pan over shepherds--Pales over husbandmen--Flora over courtezans--Diana over huntsmen. So the seamen, among Catholics, pray to St. Nicholas--the shepherds to St. Windoline--the husbandmen to St. John the Baptist--the courtezans to St. Magdalene--and the huntsmen to St. Hubert.

The saints too have received the equipage of the divi. To St. Wolfgang, the hatchet or hook of Saturn--to Moses, the horns of Jupiter Ammon--to St. Peter, the keys of Janus.

In the same way as the Pagans worshipped these divi but stigmatized them--Apollo as a rake, Mercury as an arrant thief, and Venus as a courtesan; there are things recorded by pious Catholics themselves of those Popes which are infallible and of saints which

are said to be in heaven, quite as little to their credit.

Minutius Felix jeers the Pagans for the vile drudgery they have put upon their Gods. "Sometimes," says he, "Hercules is set to empty dung; Apollo turns cow-herd to Ametus; Neptune hires himself to Laomedon as bricklayer to build up the walls of Troy, and is cheated out of his wages."

So among the glorious miracles of the Holy Virgin, we find that she descends from heaven to bleed a young man in the arm; to take the place of a naughty abbess who has eloped with a monk; to mend the gown of St. Thomas of Canterbury who had torn it on a nail, and to wipe the sweat off the faces of the monks of Chevraux whilst they were at work.

But as I have said before, there has been something more than imitation. There has been adoption. The Roman Catholics have canonized several of the pagan gods. Bacchus, the God of topers, has become St. Baccus, a worshipful saint of the perennial calendar; and Brighit, the Goddess of the Druids, St. Bridget, a patron saint of Ireland.

The most distinguishing feature of the Roman Catholic religion is the idolatrous worship of the Virgin Mary. It is idolatrous, for to this woman whom it is palpable from Scripture that Christ treated as a being inferior to himself, are rendered prayers and honors as numerous and high as those which are rendered to Him, and in all instances they are placed upon a level with each other.

They have made her immaculate, although she was the wife of a carpenter, and although the brethren of Jesus are more than once mentioned in the gospels.

And as there was no mention made in Scripture of her death, they inferred that, like Enoch and Elijah and her Holy Son, she had been taken up into Heaven. Upon this bare conjecture, the doctrine was assiduously inculcated into the minds of the ignorant, and a service was introduced into the liturgy called "The Assumption of the Virgin Mary."

Bonaventura who was canonized a saint, and who is spoken of by his brother-catholics as the Seraphic Doctor, wrote a book called "The Imitation of the Virgin Mary," after St. Thomas-a-Kempis' well-known work, in which he exhorts all faithful catholic; to pray to the Virgin Mary by whose intercession their souls may be saved.

In the Psalter which St. Bonaventura edited, he changes in each of the 150 Psalms the word Lord or God, for that of Lady or Mary, interspersing in some much of his own composition, and adding the Gloria Patri to each.

For instance in the 148th Psalm-(page 491 of the Psalter).

"Praise our Lady of Heaven, glorify her in the highest. Praise her all ye men and cattle, ye birds of the heaven and fishes of the sea. Praise her sun and moon, ye stars and circles of the planets. Praise her Cherubin and Seraphin, thrones and dominions and

powers. Praise her all ye legions of angels. Praise her all ye orders of spirits on high.

"Let everything that hath breath praise our Lady."

Theophilus Raynaud, a Jesuit of Lyons, in his work entitled *Diptycha Mariana* thus writes:--

"The torrents of Heaven and the fountains of the great deep, I would rather open than close in homage of the Virgin. And if her son Jesus has omitted anything, as to the pre-eminence of the exaltation of his own mother, I a servant, I a slave, not indeed with effect, but with affection would delight in filling it up."

Again:--

"In like manner are her feet to be blessed with which she carried the Lord, the womb in which she carried him, the heart whence she courageously believed in him and fervently loved him, the breasts with which she gave him suck, the hands with which she nourished him, the mouth and tongue with which she gave to him the happy kisses of our redemption, the nostrils with which she smelled the sweet-smelling fragrance of his humanity, the ears with which she listened with delight to his eloquence, the eyes with which she devoutly looked upon him, the body and soul which Christ consecrated in her with every benediction. And these most sacred members must be saluted and blessed with all devotion, so that separate salutations must be addressed to the several members separately, namely, Hail Mary! two to the feet, one to the womb, one to the heart, two to the breasts, two to the hands, two to the mouth and tongue, two to the lips, two to the nostrils, two to the ears, two to the eyes, two to the soul and body. And thus in all there are twenty salutations which after the manner of a daily payment with separate and an equal number of kneelings, if it can be done before her image or altar, are to be paid to the glorious Virgin according to that psalm, (144). Every day will I give thanks unto thee and praise THY name for ever and ever."

In the following extract from a little work published at Dublin, 1836, and entitled "The Little Testament of the Holy Virgin," God and the Virgin are placed upon an equality.

"Mary! sacred name under which no one should despair. Mary! sacred name often assaulted but always victorious. Mary! it shall be my life, my strength, my comfort. Every day shall I invoke it and the divine name of Jesus. The Son shall awake the recollection of the mother, and the mother that of the son. Jesus and Mary! this is what my heart shall say at my last hour if my tongue cannot. I shall hear them on my death-bed, they shall be wafted on my expiring breath, and I with them to see THEM, know THEM, bless and love THEM for eternity. Amen."

But she is sometimes made even greater than God.

"My soul," says the blessed Eric Suzon, is in the hands of Mary, so that if the judge wishes to condemn me, the sentence must pass through this clement Queen, and she

knows how to prevent its execution."

It even became a custom at one time in their church to date the Christian era not from the birth of the Christ, but from the virgin mother of God. See Emanuel Acosta's Acts of the Jesuits in the East. Dilingæ. 1571. Ad annum usque a Deipara Virgine, 1568.

The question now naturally arises, why does the Virgin Mary receive this worship and these honors which are only due to God.

You will be surprised when I tell you that this also is a remnant of heathenism.

In all nations, long before the Christian era, a female with a child in her arms had been worshipped. Among the Egyptians it was Isis, among the Etruscans it was Venus, among the Phrygians it was Atys.

In fact as Isis was the original of the Proserpine, the Venus, the Diana, the Juno, the Maia and the Cere of ancient Rome, so she was the original of the Virgin Mary of the Roman Catholic Church.

In Montfaucon we find several plates of Isis giving suck to the boy Horus.

In the year 1747, a Mithraic monument was found at Oxford--a female nursing an infant-which Dr. Stukeley proved to be a representation of the Goddess of the Year nursing the God Day.

It is indeed not improbable that Oxford with its seven hills, its river Isis, and the bull in its coat of arms had been established by priests who, like the Druids, were acquainted with Egyptian lore.

An ancient Etruscan monument was discovered at Rome, the precise model of those pictures of the Madonna and her child so common in Italy and throughout the world.

In many churches on the continent, the Virgin Mary is represented with a lily or lotus in her hand. This plant was sacred to Isis, and was held in reverence by the priests of Egypt and of India.

Isis was the wife of Osiris, as the moon was called the wife of the sun.

In the hymn of the Assumption, the Virgin is entreated "to calm the rage of her heavenly husband."

The month of May was sacred to Isis.

It is called by the Papists "Mary's month."

Venus, the Isis of the Romans, was born from the foam of the sea.

In the form of prayer called *Litaniæ Lauritanæ*, there are more than forty addresses to the Virgin, invoking her as the star of the sea, as the mystical rose, and by a variety of other heathen epithets.

In another prayer she is named *amica stella*, *naufragis*, and in Sanval's *Historie des Antiquités de Paris*, *étoile éclatante de la mer*.

The chief title of Venus was *Regina Cæloium*.

And the Holy Virgin is repeatedly invoked in the Romish liturgy as the Queen of Heaven.

Finally, on the 25th of March the ancient Phrygians devoted a festival to the mother of the Gods, which very day still bears among Catholics and their Protestant imitators the name of Lady's Day.

All this does not impeach one iota or tittle of the truth of Christianity. I do not say that the Christians invented a personage, and called her the Virgin Mary. I merely prove that the Roman Catholics pay those idolatrous tributes to the Virgin Mary which their ancestors rendered to Isis in Egypt, or to Venus in Rome, and that they represent her in the same manner.

For instance, in the pictures of the Madonna and the Child, we see the Virgin's head encircled by a crescent halo of light, and the child's by many luminous rays.

The one is a symbol of the new moon sacred to Isis, the latter an imitation of the radiance of the sun of whom Horus was the offspring.

The spires and towers of our churches are also imitated from the pyramids and obelisks of antiquity. These were erected as emblems of the sun's beams which fall pyramidically upon the earth.

Many of the heathen festivals are still celebrated by Christians. In the liturgy of the Greek Church there is a ritual named "The Benediction of the Waters." A wooden temple, richly gilt and hung round with sacred pictures, is erected upon the Neva at St. Petersburg when it is frozen, and a procession is formed by the clerks, the deacons, the priests and the bishops dressed in their richest robes, and bearing the tapers and the sacred pictures, and the service is read within the temple.

This is not unlike "The Feast of Lamps" before described, which the Egyptians partly celebrated on the Nile, a river which in one of the prayers of the Greek Church is called "The Monarch of the Floods."

The conception of the Virgin Mary is represented on the same day (the 2nd of February) as that of the miraculous conception of Juno by the ancient Romans. This, says the author of the *Perennial Calendar*, is a remarkable coincidence.

It is also a remarkable coincidence that the Feast of All-Saints, which is celebrated by the Roman Catholics on the 2nd of November and which retains its place in the Protestant calendar, should have been on the same day as the Festum dei Mortis of the Romans, and should still be annually kept by the Buddhists of Thibet, and by the natives of South America and as a Druidic custom by the rustic classes of Ireland.

It is also a remarkable coincidence that the Romans should have had their Prosipernalia, or Feast of Candles or Candlemass in February-their Palelia, or shepherd's feast on Midsummer Day which is sacred to St. John the Baptist, and that the Romish Carnival should be held at the same time as the ancient Saturnalia, and should resemble so closely those orgies which were of a masquerade character.

Thus we see that the Roman Catholics have been in the habit of celebrating Christian festivals upon days which were held sacred by the heathens. Whether this was from mere slavish imitation, or from a fondness for old associations, or from a desire to sanctify those days unhallowed by paganism it is impossible to say.

One of the most extraordinary examples of this custom is to be found in our grand festival of Christmas.

All will allow, I think, that there is no evidence to prove that the twenty-fifth of December was the actual day upon which Christ was born. And that He really arose on Easter Day can scarcely be believed, since the fixing of that day was not arranged among the early Christians till after swords as well as words had been used in the conflict, and several fierce battles had been fought.

I hope that I shall not weaken the genial feelings with which Christmas Day, that holiday of the year, is greeted by the nation if I expose the real origin of the festival. But that I feel sure is impossible. It would need something more than a few facts from old books to blot out all those happy associations which crowd around that glorious festival, which though it may be celebrated on the wrong day is kept in the right manner.

I may, however, show those Christians who worship the letter and not the spirit, who attach more sanctity to the day than to the festival, who set their children over grave books and who forbid them to laugh on that day when there is a smile even on the poor man's lips, I may show those word-mongers, those silly Puritans, those harsh blunderers in religion what honor they have paid to heathenism all their lives.

The festival of the twenty-fifth of December, which we call Christmas, was observed by the Druids on that day by lighting great fires on the tops of hills. The festival was repeated on the twelfth day afterwards, which we call old Christmas Day.

And even now there are certain rites performed under the sacred mistletoe on Christmas Day which certainly have little to do with Christianity.

The Jews also celebrated a festival on the twenty-fifth of December which -they called or the feast of light, and which Josephus believed to have been instituted by Judas Maccabaeus.

The twenty-fifth of December too was the birthday of the God Mithra, and it was an old custom of the heathens to celebrate the birthdays of their Gods.

And now I will explain when this day was first established as the birthday of Christ. The Cœnobite monks finding that in their monasteries (most of which were pagan seminaries built before the Christian era) a day had been from time immemorial dedicated to the God Sol as his birthday, and that he bore the name of Lord--this Lord they conceived must be their Lord, and after many disputes the twenty-fifth of December was established as the anniversary of Christ, and so the Druidic festival of the winter solstice became a Christian ceremony.

The origin of Sunday is very similar; but while the heathen festival of Christmas has received a Christian name, this has retained its Pagan appellation.

Such was the abhorrence which the early Christians felt for their persecutors, the Jews, that they were wont to reject all that was Jewish, as the first Puritans rejected all that was Romish without considering its intrinsic merits.

God had ordained the seventh day for man's rest and recreation. He had given forth that edict from Mount Sinai not to the Israelites only, but to the whole world. But since the Jews faithfully kept this commandment, the Christians hated the Sabbath and took a step which was wholly unauthorized by their Master, or by any of his Apostles. They changed the day.

They called this new day the Lord's Day, or the Day-of-the-Sun.

The word Lord is heathen, and is equivalent to Baal in Chaldee and to Adonis in Phœnician. It first crept into the Scripture thus:

The Jews, in obedience to the law "thou shalt not take the name of Jehovah thy God in vain," never wrote or spoke His name except on the most solemn occasions. And the first translators to avoid the frequent repetition of the word, first used this hieroglyphic and afterwards the term which the Pagans applied to their God Sol, which in Greek was in Latin dominus, in Celtic adon, in Hebrew adoni.

Now the Persians set apart every month four of these Lord's days or lesser festivals to the Sun. On these days, they had more solemn service in their temples than on other days, reading portions of their sacred books and preaching morality.

But the most curious point of resemblance is that on these days alone they prayed standing. And in the sixteenth canon of the Council of Nice to kneel in prayer on Sundays is forbidden.

Constantine, after pretending to be converted to Christianity, ordered the day Domini invicti Solis to be set apart for the celebration of peculiar mysteries in honor of the great god Sol.

The early Christians were accused by the heathens of worshipping the sun, and Justin, as if loathing the very name of the Jewish Sabbath, preferred writing of it the day-of-the-sun.

Since it would be now almost impossible to restore our weekly day of rest to that day which God thought fit to appoint, and which man thought fit to alter, I may be blamed for having made these disclosures which certainly do not redound to the honor of our religion.

But I have had my reason. It is to show the folly of those who go word-mongering, to make triumphant comparisons between the Day-of-the-sun as observed by Christians, and God's Sabbath as observed by Jews; who bring out their religion, their consciences, their bibles, their sternest faces and their best clothes upon this day, and who believe or seem to believe that God sleeps all the week, and that if they go to church on Sunday they succeed in deceiving him.

It is not at this hour or at that hour that God is to be worshipped. Lip-services resemble the treacherous kisses of a Judas, and the heart does not naturally aspire towards heaven at the striking of a clock or at the ringing of a church bell.

Before concluding this chapter, I should wish to exculpate myself from the supposition that I have written in an unjust spirit against the members of the Roman Catholic Church.

I know that they can boast of many devout disciples-of many enterprising missionaries-of many conscientious priests. I know that they are not now more foolish and bigoted than the members of the Protestant churches, as in former times the murderers of St. Bartholomew were no worse than the cruel Calvin, nor Bloody Mary than James the First. In those days a remnant of the horrible custom of human sacrifice was preserved by all alike. They martyred those of the same religion as themselves but not of the same sect, burning them, drowning them, tearing them limb from limb like the Pagans of old, as offerings to a kind and gracious God.

It is true that the Roman Catholics were the most ruthless in barbarity and the most ingenious in torture, but it was because they possessed the most power.

I know that Roman Catholic priests do not really worship those images of the saints to which they bend their knees. But though they are not idolaters themselves, it cannot be denied that they have taught their disciples to be idolaters.

I do not suppose that men of genius or even of education ever yet were, or ever could

be image worshippers.

Listen to these words of the Emperor Julian, written in an age that is supposed to have been enslaved in idolatry :

"The statues of the gods, the altars that are raised to them, and the holy fires that are burnt in their honor have been instituted by our fathers as signs and emblems of the presence of the Gods, not that we should regard them as Gods, but that we should honor the Gods in them."

I might quote fifty other passages to prove that in all idolatrous nations the priests and philosophers, though affecting to be image-worshippers, have in their hearts scorned those pieces of wood and stone to which their dupes so devoutly kneeled.

In papistry, there are as many dupes and as much idolatry as ever existed in Egypt, in Italy, or in Greece.

Witness a Roman Catholic service, and you will see heads bowed before stone-images and prayers, murmured not in mere reverence but in actual adoration.

Study the doctrine of Transubstantiation. Is not that an instance of the emblem being forgotten in the God?

These abuses are melancholy to contemplate, for these alone it is which hold two Christian churches asunder. These with the Platonic dogma of purgatory upon which no man can decide, and upon which therefore it is foolish for man to contend.

English priests beware how you nurse idolatry; for those who do so, enchain not only others but themselves.

In the reign of Peter the Great, a law was passed by a synod of the Greek Church in Russia enacting that the use of pictures in churches was contrary to the principles in Christianity, and that all such should be removed from places of worship.

The Emperor sanctioned this law, but feared to put it into execution lest it should cause a general insurrection.

Superstition, born of Satan, fed and fostered by priests, like a hideous cuttle-fish has cast its white and slimy arms around the Harlot of Babylon, and. has bedaubed her with its black blood. Now she loves this blood and knows not that it defiles her; she loves these embraces and knows not that they enslave her. But some day aspiring to be free, she will attempt to rise from her grave of sand and foul weeds; and then seizing her in its horrible arms, that demon who so long has triumphed over her will sink with her forever beneath the waves.

II.

IN THE EMBLEMS OF FREEMASONRY.

THERE is a divine and hidden science whose origin can only be discovered by the wavering lights of tradition, whose doctrines and purposes are enveloped in sacred mysteries.

It is now degenerated into a society of gluttons and wine-bibbers, who yawn while their Masters expound to them those emblems which have excited the wonder of the greatest philosophers of the past, and who deem that the richest gem of freemasonry, is the banquet which closes the labor of the Lodge.

And yet this order can boast of some learned and intellectual men, who endeavor to find the key to the hidden language of symbols, and who appreciate at its true value the high honors which the initiated are permitted to enjoy.

In spite of the abuses with which it has been degraded, in spite of the sneers with which the ignorant revile it, this institution still possesses much that is holy and sublime.

No feelings can be compared with those which a young man feels when, attired in strange array, blind-folded, the dagger pointed to his naked left breast, he is led through the mystic labyrinth, whose intricate ways are emblematical of the toilsome wanderings of his soul.

The strains of solemn music-the mysterious words-the low knock at the portal--the sudden blaze of light--and the strange sight which await his eyes feeble and fluttering from their long imprisonment.

What awe he feels, as kneeling on his right knee, his left hand placed upon the Book of the Law, encircled by the Masters in their robes of office, and the two white wands held over his head in the form of a cross, he takes the oath of secrecy and faith, "to hail, conceal and never reveal the hidden mysteries of the fellowship" to which he is now admitted.

And what pride flushes in his heart when the secret signs and key-words are imparted to him, and when the white apron, a badge more glorious than the fabled Golden Fleece, or the Roman Eagle is tied round his waist.

Surrounded by all those signs and symbols by which the ancient nations were wont to express the power and presence of God, the Mason's Lodge resembles a scene of enchantment in the midst of this wilderness which we call the world. And those who are thus assembled together in mystic robes, seem spirits of another age, who have returned to hold their hidden meetings once more in the catacombs of the Egyptian pyramids, or in the cavern-temple sacred to Mithra, or in the subterranean labyrinths of the holy Druids.

The brethren seated in a circle, one of the Masters arises and advances to the midst. He relates to them a tradition of the origin of their craft.

"After the sun had descended down the seventh age from Adam before the flood of Noah, there was born unto Methusael, the son of Mehujael, a man called Lamach who took unto himself two wives. the name of the one was Adah, of the other Zillah. Now Adah his first wife, bare two sons--the one named Jabel and the other Jubal. Jabel was the inventor of geometry and the first who built houses of stone and timber, and Jubal was the inventor of music and harmony. Zillah, his second wife, bare Tubal Cain, the instructor of every artificer in brass and iron, and a daughter called Naamah who was the founder of the weaver's craft.

"All these had knowledge from above, that the Almighty would take vengeance for sin either by fire or by water, so great was the wickedness of the world. So they reasoned among themselves how they might preserve the knowledge of the sciences which they had found, and Jabel said that there were two different kinds of stone of such virtue that one would not burn and the other would not sink--the one called marble and the other latres. They then agreed to write all the science that they had found upon these stones.

"After the destruction of the world, these two pillars were discovered by Hermes, the son of Shem. Then the craft of masonry began to flourish, and Nimrod was one of the earliest patrons of the art. Abraham, the son of Jerah, was skilled in the seven sciences and taught the Egyptians the science of grammar. Euclid was his pupil, and instructed them in the art of making mighty walls and ditches to preserve their houses from the inundations of the Nile, and by geometry measured out the land, and divided it into partitions so that each man might ascertain his own property. And he it was who gave masonry the name of geometry.

"In his days, it came to pass that the sovereign and lords of the realm had gotten many sons unlawfully by other men's wives, insomuch that the land was grievously burdened with them. A council was called but no reasonable remedy was proposed. The king then ordered a proclamation to be made throughout his realms, that high rewards would be given to any man who would devise a proper method for maintaining the children. Euclid dispelled the difficulty. He thus addressed the king: 'My noble sovereign, if I may have order and government of these lord's sons, I will teach them the seven liberal sciences, whereby they may live honestly like gentlemen, provided that you will grant me power over them by virtue of your royal commission.'

"This request was immediately complied with, and Euclid established a Lodge of Masons."

This tale is curious as being the earliest account of an educational institution.

There are various traditions of minor interest relating to the patriarchal ages and to the wanderings of the Israelites in the wilderness.

The Freemasons claim descent from that body of builders who, some from Phœnicia, and some from India, came to Jerusalem to erect the temple of Solomon. They also

assert that these masons were governed by the same laws, and united by the same ties as those of the modern order, and in the initiation of a Master-mason the following tradition is related respecting the death of the Phœnician Hiram Abiff, the master architect who directed the building of the temple:

"There were fifteen fellow-craftsmen, who finding that the temple was almost finished, and that they had not received the master's word because their time was not come, agreed to extort it from their master, the skilful Hiram Abiff, on the first opportunity, that they might pass for masters in other countries and have masters' wages. Twelve recanted and the other three determined to carry out the plot. Their names were Jubela, Jubelo, and Jubelum. These three crafts knowing that it was always the master's custom at twelve at noon, when the men were called off to refreshment, to go into the sanctum sanctorum to pray to the true and living God--they placed themselves at the three entrances to the temple, viz., at the west, south and east doors. There was no entrance in the north, because thence the sun darts no rays. Thus they waited while he made his prayer to the Lord, to have the word or grip as he came out, or his life. So Hiram came to the east door, and Jubela demanded the master's word. Hiram told him he did not receive it in such a manner but he must wait, and time and a little patience would bring him to it, for it was not in his power to deliver it except the three Grand Masters were together, viz: Solomon, King of Israel, Hiram, King of Tyre, and Hiram Abiff.

"Jubela struck him across the throat with a 24-inch gauge. He fled thence to the south door where he was accosted in the same manner by Jubelo to whom he gave a similar answer, and who gave him a blow with a square upon his left breast. Hiram reeled but recovered himself, and flew to the west door where Jubelum gave him a heavy blow upon the head with a common gavel or setting maul which proved his death.

"After this they carried him out of the west door and hid him in a heap of rubbish till it was twelve at night, when they found means to bury him in a handsome grave, six feet east and west, and six feet in height.

"When Hiram was missed, King Solomon made great inquiry after him, and not hearing anything of him supposed him to be dead. The twelve crafts that had recanted hearing the said report, and their consciences pricking them, went and informed King Solomon with white aprons and gloves as tokens of their innocence. King Solomon forthwith sent them in search of the three murderers who had absconded, and they agreed to make the pursuit in four parties, three going north, three south, three east, and three west.

"As one of these parties traveled down to the sea of Joppa, one of them sitting himself down to rest by the side of a rock, heard the following lamentations proceed from a cleft within:--

"O that I had my throat cut across, and my tongue torn out by the root, and buried in the sands of the sea at low water a cable length from the shore, where the tide doth regularly ebb and flow twice in the course of the twenty-four hours, than that I had been

concerned in the death of our master Hiram.'

And then another voice:

"Oh! that I had my heart torn from under my naked left breast, and given to the vultures of the air as a prey, rather than I had been concerned in the death of so good a master.'

"But oh!' cried Jubelum. I struck him harder than you both, for I killed him. Oh! that I had had my body severed in two, one part carried to the south, and the other to the north, my bowels burnt to ashes and scattered before the four winds of the earth, rather than I had been concerned in the death of our master Hiram.'

"The brother that heard these sorrowful lamentations hailed the other two, and they went into the cleft of the rock and took them and bound them, and brought them before King Solomon, when they owned what had passed, and what they had done, and did not desire to live, therefore King Solomon ordered their own sentences to be executed upon them, saying, 'They have signed their own deaths, and let it be upon them as they have said.'

"Jubela was taken out, and his throat cut across, and his tongue torn out by the root, and buried in the sands of the sea at low water, a cable length from the shore, where the tide did regularly ebb and flow twice in the course of the twenty-four hours.

"Jubelo's heart was torn from under his naked left breast, and was given to the vultures of the air as a prey.

"Jubelum's body was severed in two, one part was carried to the north, the other to the south, his bowels were burnt to ashes and scattered to the four winds of the earth."

The real secret of Freemasonry, viz., its origin and purport, as yet remain an enigma and will probably ever remain so.

There are some authors who have fixed the source of this sacred and mysterious fountain within the oaken groves of the extinguished order of the Druids.

Who assert that when Druidism was proscribed, its priests adopted various disguises and carried their learning into various professions. Some became school-masters and taught science to the youth of Britain, as they had once done in the forest seminaries of Mona. Some fortune-tellers, the parents of the tribes of gypsies who still retain a kind of brotherhood united by oaths and secret signs, and who at one time possessed so strange an ascendancy over the minds of the vulgar.

And others who formed themselves into a community resembling, if not in their power, at least in their unanimity, that ancient body of priests who had once been the sovereigns of Britain.

At first I was inclined to believe that such was really the case, and that Freemasonry was no more than a reproduction of Druidism in the Middle Ages. On searching for materials, I met with evidence in limine which tended to confirm me in this conviction. There was a manuscript discovered in the Bodleian Library at Oxford in 1696, which was supposed to have been written about the year 1436. It purports to be an examination of one of the brotherhood by King Henry VI, and is allowed by all masonic writers to be genuine.

Its title is as follows: "Certain questions with answers to the same concerning the mystery of masonry written by King, Henry the Sixth and faithfully copied by me John Leylande, antiquarian, by command of his highness."

I give an extract modernizing the English of the original, which, though quaint, would be unintelligible to all but antiquaries:--

"What mote it be? It is the knowledge of nature, and the power of its various operations; particularly the skill of reckoning, of weights and measures, of constructing buildings and dwellings of all kinds, and the true manner of forming all things for the use of man.

"Where did it begin ?-it began with the first men of the East, who were before the first men of the West, and coming with it, it hath brought all comforts to the wild and comfortless.

"Who brought it to the West?--the Phoenicians who, being great merchants, came first from the East into Phoenicia, for the convenience of commerce, both East and West by the Red and Mediterranean Seas.

"How came it into England?--Pythagoras, a Grecian, traveled to acquire knowledge in Egypt and in Syria, and in every other land where the Phoenicians had planted masonry; and gaining admittance into all lodges of masons, he learned much, and returned and dwelt in Grecia Magna, growing and becoming mighty wise and greatly renowned. Here he formed a great lodge at Crotona, and made many masons, some of whom traveled into France, and there made many more, from whence, in process of time, the art passed into England."

This, I need not remind the reader, is a story very similar to those current respecting the first planting of Druidism in Britain.

I also discovered as I thought, a key to the tradition of Hiram Abiff, which I have just related, viz., that it was simply the story of Osiris (killed by Typhon the Evil Spirit, buried in a coffin and found by Isis) so corrupted by modern Masons.

In the continuation of the story of Hiram, it is stated that the twelve crafts on discovering his body were unable to raise it, and that King Solomon ordered a lodge of master-masons to be summoned and said, "I will go myself in person and try to raise the body by the master's grip or the lion's paw.

By means of this grip the Grand-Master Hiram was raised.

Now in a figure painted on a mummy at the Austin Fryar's of La Place des Victoires, representing the death and resurrection of Osiris, is seen an exact model of the position of the master-mason as he raises Hiram.

Jubela, Jubelo, Jubelum are merely variations from the Latin word jubeo, I command. The pretended assassins are represented as demanding the master's grip and word from Hiram in an imperious manner.

A more satisfactory proof of the truth of this statement is contained in an astronomical notion of the Hindoos, whose Chrisna is the same as the Osiris of the Egyptians.

The Decans, or Elohim, are the gods of whom it is said the Almighty created the Universe. They arranged the order of the zodiac. The Elohim of the summer were gods of a benevolent disposition: they made the days long, and loaded the sun's head with topaz. While the three wretches that presided in the winter at the extreme end of the year, hid in the realms below, were, with the constellation to which they belonged, cut off from the rest of the zodiac; and as they were missing, were consequently accused of bringing Chrisna into those troubles which at last ended in his death.

Even allowing these premises to be true, it does not necessarily follow that the traditionary account of the building of Solomon's Temple by masons was also allegorical.

And indeed there is so much that is purely Hebrew in ceremonial masonry, that one is almost forced to believe that the Freemasons of the present day are really descended from a body of architects, who, like the Dionysiacks of Asia Minor, were united into a fraternal association and who erected the temple of Solomon.

In these ceremonies, however, and in their emblems there is much also that is Druidic, and if Freemasonry did not emanate from Druidism, there can be no doubt that it sprang from the same origin.

I will trace out the affinity between the Masonic Order of the Present, and the Druid Order of the Past. It shall be for the reader to decide whether these Masonic usages are vestiges of Druidism, or mere points of family resemblance.

The initiations of Masons are so similar to those of the Druids, that any Mason reading my article upon the subject must have been struck by the resemblance.

The ovade wore a gold chain round his neck. And the apprentice when initiated has a silk cord, in masonic parlance a cable-tow, suspended from his throat. Like the ovade, the apprentice is blindfolded, and as the former was led through the mazes of a labyrinth, the latter is led backwards and forwards, and in various directions.

Thunder and lightning were counterfeited in the initiation of a Druid, and in that of the Royal Arch the Companions fire pistols, clash swords, overturn chairs, and roll cannon balls across the floor.

The tiler stands at the door with a drawn sword.

And tests of fortitude though less severe than in former times are not unknown among Masons. The following arduous trial was used in the Female Lodges of Paris:--

"A candidate for admission was usually very much excited. During a part of the ceremony she was conducted to an eminence, and told to look down at what awaited her if she faltered in her duty. Beneath her appeared a frightful abyss in which a double row of iron spikes were visible. No doubt her mind was in a chaos of fanaticism, for instead of shrinking at the sight, she exclaimed "I can encounter all," and sprang forward. At that moment a secret spring was touched, and the candidate fell not on the spikes, but on a green bed in imitation of a verdant plain. She fainted but was soon recovered by her friends, when the scene having changed she was reanimated and soothed by the sweet strains of choral music."

I have already shown, I trust conclusively, that the Druidic mysteries were founded on those of the Egyptians, and were analogous to those of Tyre, Persia and Hindostan; and that their moral doctrines and pristine simplicity of worship were those of the Hebrew Patriarchs.

It will be easy to show that those of Freemasonry, if not a mere perpetuation of the Druidic were derived from the same fountains, and that the secrets of this science and philosophy are hidden from us by the veil of Isis.

To the Egyptian candidate on his- initiation, the Hierophant displayed the holy volume of hieroglyphics which he then restored to its repository.

So when the eyes of the apprentice are first released from darkness, he beholds the volume of the sacred law.

During the Persian initiations, the doctrine was enforced ex cathedra, from the desk or pulpit. So the Grand Master sits on a throne before which the candidate kneels, pointing a dagger to his naked left breast and two white wands being crossed above his head.

On the seal of the ancient Abbey of Arbroath in Scotland, is a representation which bears a curious resemblance to the engraving on a seal used by the priests of Isis, and which Plutarch describes in his Essay on Isis and Osiris--a man kneeling, his hands bound, and a knife at his throat.

In all the ancient mysteries before an aspirant could claim participation in the higher secrets of the institution, he was placed within the pastos or bed, or coffin, and was

subjected to a confinement in darkness for a certain time.

This I have described to be practiced by the Druids. In some of their labyrinths, discovered in France, the remains of cells have been found, and there was a dark cell of probation recently standing near Maidstone, Kitt's Cotti House--from Ked (or Ceridwen) the British Isis, and cotti an ark, or chest.

So in the initiation of a Master Mason, the candidate is in some lodges buried in a coffin to represent the death of the murdered Hiram Abiff.

The grand festival of Masonry is on Midsummer Day, which was also the grand festival of the Druids.

The processional movements of the Masons as of the Druids were mostly circular.

I have already instanced the symbol by which the Jews expressed the word 'Jehovah.' This letter jod was believed by them to denote the presence of God, especially when conveyed in a circle. Masons also have a word which they are not allowed to pronounce except in the presence of a full lodge, and they pay peculiar reverence to a point within a circle.

Some of the Druidic monuments are simple circles with a stone standing in the midst, and the boss in the centre of their circular shields had probably the same signification.

The Masonic Lodge, like all Pagan temples, is built due east and west. Its form is an oblong square which the ancients believed to be the shape of the world. In the west are two pillars surmounted by globes. The one on the left is called Boaz, and is supposed to represent Osiris or the sun, the other Jachin, the emblem of Isis or the moon. The floor is mosaic, and the walls are adorned with the various symbols of the craft.

The cross is one of the chief emblems in Masonry as it was in Druidism, and in all the Pagan religions. The Taw is a badge in Royal Arch Masonry, and almost all the other varieties of the symbol are used in Masonry.

The key and the cross-keys are also mosaic symbols. They are supposed to be astronomical signs of Anubis, or the Dog-Star.

An ear-of-corn is a prominent emblem in Masonry, proving that the order did not confine their intellects and their labors to the building of houses, but devoted themselves also to agriculture.

A sprig of acacia is one of the emblems revered by the Masons, and answers to the Egyptian lotus, to the myrtle of Eleusis, to the golden branch of Virgil and to the Druidic mistletoe. It is curious that Houzza which Mahomet esteemed an idol--Houzza so honored in the Arabian works of Ghatfân Koreisch, Kenanah and Salem should be simply the acacia. Thence was derived the word huzza! in our language, which was

probably at first a religious exclamation like the Evohe! of the Bacchantes.

The doctrines of Masonry are the most beautiful that it is possible to conceive. They breathe the simplicity of the earliest ages animated by the love of a martyred God.

That word which the Puritans translated "charity," but which is really "love"--love is the key-stone of the Royal Arch upon which is supported the entire system of this mystic science.

In the lectures of the French Lodges the whole duty of a Mason is summed up in this one brief sentence: "Aimez-vous les uns les autres, instruisez-vous, secourez-vous, voilà tout noire livre, toute noire loi, toute noire science."

"Love one another, teach one another, help one another. That is all our doctrine, all our science, all our law."

Ah! rail against us bigoted and ignorant men, slander us curious and jealous women if you will. Those who obey the precepts of their masters, and those who listen to the truths which they inculcate can readily forgive you. It is impossible to be a good Mason without being a good man.

We have no narrow-minded prejudices; we do not debar from our society this sect or that sect; it is sufficient for us that a man worships God, no matter under what name or in what manner, and we admit him. Christians, Jews, Mahometans, Buddhists are enrolled among us, and it is in the Mason's Lodge alone that they can kneel down together without feeling hatred, without professing contempt against their brother worshippers.

III.

IN RUSTIC FOLK-LORE.

IT is strange with what pertinacity the ignorant retain those customs which their fathers observed, and which they hold sacred without understanding either their origin or their purpose.

It is an attribute of human nature to hallow all that belongs to the past. It is impossible to look without admiration upon a venerable building which has lived through centuries, an immortal work of art; it is natural that we should also revere those customs which have descended to us by no written laws, by no kingly proclamations, but simply from lip to ear, from father to son.

Before I enter the homes of our peasants however, come with me to the mountains of Wales where we shall find the true descendants, not only of the ancient Britons but also of the Holy Druids themselves.

I mean the Bards, or harpers, who still continue to strike melodious notes in this land of music and metheglin, and who still convey to their hearers the precepts of their great

ancestors.

The Bards were always held in high reverence in Wales, and that is why they have lived so long. When the priests had been swept away by the sword of the new religion, this glorious association of musicians remained, and consented to sing praises to Jesus Christ the Redeemer, instead of to HU the pervading spirit.

Indeed it was said of Barach, who was chief Bard to Conchobhar Nesson, King of Ulster, that he described the passion of Jesus in such moving words that the king, transported with rage, drew his sword and fell to hacking and hewing the trees of the wood in which he was standing, mistaking them for Jews, and even died of the frenzy.

By studying the old Welsh laws of Howel the good king (A. D.,940), one finds some curious matter respecting the position which the Bards held at that time in the Court and country.

Y Bardd Teulu, or Court Bard (an appointment from which that of our poet-laureate probably originated) on receiving his commission, was presented by the king with a silver harp, by the queen with a gold ring. He held the eighth place at Court. He possessed his land free. At the three great festivals of the year, Christmas, Easter, and Whitsuntide, he sat at the prince's table. On these occasions, he was entitled to have the disdain's or steward-of-the-household's garment for his fee. In addition to these perquisites, the king found him in woolen robes, and the queen in linen, and he received a present from every maiden when she married, but nothing at the bridal feasts of women who had been married before.

At regal feasts the guests were placed in threes; a tune called Gosteg yr Halen, "the prelude of the salt," was sung as the salt-cellar was placed before the king, and as they were served with meats, &c., upon platters of clean grass and rushes, the harp played all the while.

When a song was called for after the feast, the Oadeir-fardd, or the bard who possessed the badge of-the-chair sang a hymn to the glory of God, and then another in honor of the king. After which, the Teuluwr, or Bard of the Hall sang upon some other subject.

If the queen wished for a song after she had retired to her apartment, the Teuluwr, might sing to her, but in a low voice, lest he disturb the other performers in the hall.

If a Bard desired a favor of the king, he was obliged to play one of his own compositions; if of a nobleman, three; and if of a villain, till he was exhausted.

His person was held so sacred that whoever slightly injured him was fined VI cows and CXX pence, and the murderer of a Bard was fined CXXVI cows. The worst murder in those days, like criminal conversations in the present age, only needed pecuniary atonement.

On a plundering expedition, the Bard received a large portion of the spoil. He preceded the warriors to battle, reciting a poem called Unhenaeth Prydain, "the glory of Britain."

An edict was issued by King Edward I. authorizing the massacre of the Bards, one of them having prophesied the liberation of Wales. The murder of the last Bard has been beautifully described by Gray in one of his poems.

Queen Elizabeth also issued a proclamation, but of a less sanguinary character against certain wandering minstrels, who appear to have been among the musicians of those days what quacks are among our modern M.D.'s. It also commissioned certain gentlemen to inquire into the various capabilities of the Welsh Bards, and to license those who were most fit to represent the musical talent of their country.

This profound question was settled at an Eisteddfod, or a musical meeting of the Bard who contested once a year for a silver harp. This practice which had existed from time immemorial is still continued in Wales, and the transactions of the Aberffraw Royal Eisteddfod were published in the year 1849.

I know little of the peculiar character of Welsh music except that it is executed mostly in B flat. Part-singing may be considered as a peculiarity of the Welsh bards. Extempore performances were common to all the ancient minstrels of the world.

A kind of extempore composition is still exercised among the Welsh peasantry, and is called Penillion singing. The harper being seated, plays one of his native airs while the singers stand round him and alternately compose a stanza upon any subject they please.

There are many clerwyr, or wandering minstrels still in Wales. Like their predecessors, they are in the habit of going from house to house, and of officiating, as our gypsy fiddlers do at all rustic festivals and weddings.

They have a curious tradition, that Madoc, a brother of one of the Kings of Wales, sailed from that country in the year 1171 A. D. and was the first European settler in Mexico. Sir Thomas Herbert who wrote a scarce book of travels in 1665, mentions it as a fact, and in Hackett's Collection of Epitaphs (1757) is this one:--

FOUND AT MEXICO.

"Madoc wyf mwydic ei wedd
lawn genan Owain Gwynedd
Ni fynwn dir fy awydd oedd
Na da mawr ond y Moroedd."

Madoc I am-mild in countenance
Of the right line of Owen Gwynedd

I wished not for land; my bent was
For no great riches, but for the seas.

We have it on the authority of a Captain Davies, and Lieutenant Roberts of Hawcorden in Flintshire, and from a MS. entry in William Penn's journal, evidence collected by the famous Dr. Owen Pughe, that the tribes of the Illinois, Madocantes, the Padoucas and Mud Indians spoke the Welsh language.

Without entering into a useless dissertation upon this subject, I will note a curious custom in which the American Indians resemble the Welsh, viz., in the habit of carrying their canoes upon their backs from rapid to rapid. Giraldus Cambrensis informs us that the Welsh used to carry their triangular boats from river to river, which occasioned a famous dealer, named Bledherc, to say: "There is amongst us a people who when they go out in search of prey carry their horses on their backs to the place of plunder; in order to catch their prey, they leap upon their horses, and when it is taken, carry their horses home again upon their shoulders."

They worshipped the same symbols of God as the ancient British-the sun, the moon, fire, water, the serpent, the cross, &c., and in the course of this chapter I shall mention other customs common to both nations.

Among the peasantry of Great Britain and Ireland, there are observed not only those traditional customs which are meaningless because they are out of date, but actual idolatries.

It may surprise the reader that the worship of fire with which our preachers and tract-writers jeer the inhabitants of Persia, is not yet extinct among us.

Spenser says that the Irish never lighted a fire without uttering a prayer. In some parts of England it is considered unlucky for the fire to go out. They have a peculiar fuel with which they feed it during the night. The Scotch peat-fires are seldom allowed to die out.

There are three days in the year on which the worship of fire is especially observed-May-day, Midsummer Eve and Allhallow E'en.

On the first of May which is called Beltan, or Beltein-Day from the Druidic Beltenus, the Phœnician Baal, the Highland herdsmen assemble on a moor, They cut a table in the sod, of a round figure, by casting a trench in the ground of such circumference as to hold the whole company. They kindle a wood fire and dress a large caudle of eggs, butter, oatmeal and milk, taking care to be supplied with plenty of beer and whiskey as well. The rites begin with spilling some of the caudle on the ground by way of a libation; on that, every one takes a cake of oatmeal, upon which are raised nine square knobs, each dedicated to some particular being, the supposed preserver of their flocks and herbs, or to some particular animal the real destroyer of them. Each person then turns his face to the fire, breaks off a knob and flinging it over his shoulder, says: This I give to thee, preserve thou my horses; this I give to thee, preserve thou my sheep, and so

on. After that, they use the same ceremony to the noxious animals. This I give to thee, oh fox! spare thou my lambs! this to thee, oh hooded crow; this to thee, oh eagle!

They then knead another cake of oatmeal which is toasted at the embers against a stone. They divide this cake into so many portions (as similar as possible to each other in size and shape) as there are persons in the company. They daub one of these portions all over with charcoal until it is quite black. They put all the bits into a bonnet and every one, blind-folded, draws. He who holds the bonnet is entitled to the last bit. Whoever draws the black morsel is the devoted person who is to be sacrificed to Baal, and is compelled to leap three times through the fire, after which they dine on the caudle.

When the feast is finished, the remains are concealed by two persons deputed for that purpose, and on the next Sunday they re-assemble and finish it.

This, you see, is a relic of the Druidic human sacrifices as well as of their fire-worship. I will give two more examples of the former.

I have noticed the custom of the Druids in great extremities of constructing a large wicker engine, of filling it with sheep, oxen and sometimes men, and setting light to it, as a mammoth sacrifice. Dr. Milner in his History of Winchester, informs us that at Dunkirk and at Douay there has existed an immemorial custom of constructing huge figures of wicker-work and canvas, and moving them about to represent a giant that was killed by their patron saint. And St. Foix, in his Essay on Paris, describes a custom which is not yet abolished in some of the small towns in France, viz., for the mayors on the Eve of St. John to put into a large basket a dozen or two cats, and to throw them into one of the festive bonfires lighted upon that occasion.

To return to May Day. In Munster and Connaught the Irish peasants drive their cattle between two fires, as if for purposes of purification. In some parts of Scotland they light a fire to feast by, and having thrown a portion of their refreshments into the flames as a propitiatory sacrifice, deck branches of mountain-ash with wreaths of flowers and heather, and walk three times round it in a procession.

Precisely the same custom is observed by the natives of America and at the same period, i.e., that of the vernal equinox.

In India there is a festival in honor of Bhavani (a Priapic personification of nature and fecundity), which the Hindoos commemorate by erecting a pole in the fields, and by adorning it with pendants and flowers round which the young people dance precisely the same as in England.

The Jews also keep a solar festival at the vernal equinox, on which occasion the Paschal lamb is sacrificed.

The Floridians and Mexicans erect a tree in the centre of their sacred enclosures

around which they dance.

On May Eve the Cornish erect stumps of trees before their doors. On the first of the month the famous May-pole is raised, adorned with flowers and encircled by the pretty country lasses who little know of what this pole, or is an emblem.

On Midsummer Eve an involuntary tribute is paid by the peasants of Great Britain and Ireland to the shades of their ancient priests, and to the Gods whom they worshipped, by lighting bonfires. The word bonfire, I may observe, is by some called bonefire because they believe (without any particular reason), that their fuel consisted of bones; by others boon-fire, because the wood was obtained by begging. *Utrum horum marvis accipe.*

The cooks of Newcastle lighted fires on Midsummer Day in the streets of that town; the custom is general almost all over Ireland, and as late as the year 1786, the custom of lighting fires was continued in the Druidic Temple at Bramham, near Harrowgate in Yorkshire, on the eve of the summer solstice.

In the Cornish tongue, Midsummer is called Goluan, which means light and rejoicing. At that season, the natives make a procession through the towns or villages with lighted torches.

The Irish dance round these fires, and sometimes fathers, taking their children in their arms, will run through the flames.

In Hindostan it is the mother who performs this office.

On all sacred days among the Druids, they resorted to their different kinds of divination, and I should tire the reader were I to enumerate half the charms and incantations which are made use of in the country on Midsummer Eve.

I have always remarked that those divinations which were probably used by priests to foretell the fate of a kingdom, or to decide upon the life or death of a human being, have now become mere methods of love prophecies with village sweethearts.

One will sow hemp-seed on Midsummer Eve, saying, Hemp-seed I sow, hemp-seed I hoe, and he that is my true love come after me and mow. She will then turn round, and expects to see the young man who will marry her.

Another will pick a kind of root which grows under mug-wort, and which, if pulled exactly at midnight on the Eve of St. John the Baptist and placed under her pillow, will give her a dream of her future husband.

Another will place over her head the orphine-plant, commonly called Midsummer-men: the bending of the leaves to the right or to the left will tell her whether her husband was true or false.

Bourne cites from the Trullan Council a species of divination, so singular, that it is impossible to read it without being reminded of the Pythoness on her tripod, or the Druidess on her seat of stone.

"On the 23rd of June, which is the Eve of St. John the Baptist, men and women were accustomed to gather together in the evening at the sea-side or in certain houses, and there adorn a girl who was her father's first-begotten child after the manner of a bride. Then they feasted and leaped after the manner of Bacchanals, and danced and shouted as they were wont to do on their holy-days; after this, they poured into a narrow-necked vessel some of the sea-water, and also put into it certain things belonging to each of them. Then as if the devil gifted the girl with the faculty of telling future things, they would enquire with a loud voice about the good or evil fortune that should attend them; upon this the girl took out of the vessel the first thing that came to hand and showed it, and gave it to the owner, who, upon receiving it, was so foolish as to imagine himself wiser, as to the good or evil fortune that should attend him."

The Druidic vervain was held in estimation on this day as we read in Ye Popish Kingdome.

Then doth ye joyfal feast of John ye Baptist take his turne,
When bonfiers great with lofty flame in every town doe burne,
And young men round about with maides doe dance in every streete,
With garlands wrought of mother-wort, or else with verwain sweete.

The following extract from the Calendar of the Romish Church, shows us what doings there used to be at Rome on the Eve and Day of St. John the Baptist--the Roman Pales--the Druidic Belenus.

JUNE.

23. The Virgil of the Nativity of John the Baptist.

Spices are given at Vespers.

Fires are lighted up.

A girl with a little drum that proclaims the garland.

Boys are dressed in girl's clothes:

Carols to the liberal: imprecations against the avaricious.

Waters are swum in during the night, and are brought in vessels that hang for purposes of divination.

Fern in great estimation with the vulgar on account of its seed.

Herbs of different kinds are sought with many ceremonies.

Girl's Thistle is gathered, and a hundred crosses by the same.

24. The Nativity of John the Baptist.

Dew and new leaves in estimation.

The vulgar solstice.

It was on Hallow-E'en that the Druids used to compel their subjects to extinguish their fires, which, when the annual dues were paid, were relighted from that holy fire which burnt in the clachan of the Druids, and which never died.

Even now all fires are extinguished on HallowE'en, and a fire being made by rubbing two sticks together they are relighted from that, and from that alone.

The same custom is observed among the Cherokee Indians.

At the village of Findern in Derbyshire, the boys and girls go every year on the 2nd of November and light a number of small fires among the furze growing there, which they call Tindles. They can give no reason for so doing.

Throughout the United Kingdom there are similar divining customs observed to those which I have just described as exercised on Midsummer Eve.

There are miscellaneous vestiges of fire-worship besides those already noticed.

In Oxfordshire revels, young women will sometimes tuck their skirts (twisting them in an ingenious manner round the ankles, and holding the ends in front of them) into a very good resemblance of men's trousers, and dance round a candle placed upon the floor, concluding by leaping over it three times. The name of this dance, too coarse to be written here, as the dance is to be described, betrays its phallic origin.

Then there is the "Dance round our coal fire," an ancient practice of dancing round the fires in the Inns of Court, which was observed in 1733, at an entertainment at the Inner Temple Hall on Lord Chancellor Talbot's taking leave of the house, when "the Master of the Revels took the Chancellor by the hand, and he Mr. Page, who with the Judges, Sergeants and Benchers danced round the Coal Fire, according to the old ceremony three times; and all the time the ancient song with music was sung by a man in a bar gown."

Last and most singular of all the Tinegin, or need-fire of the Highlanders.

To defeat sorceries, certain persons appointed to do so are sent to raise the need-fire. By any small river or lake, or upon any island a circular booth of turf or stone is erected, on which a rafter of birch-tree is placed and the roof covered over. In the centre is set a perpendicular post, fixed by a wooden pin to the couple, the lower end being placed in an oblong groove on the floor, and another pole placed horizontally between the upright post and the leg of the couple into both of which the ends being tapered are inserted. This horizontal timber is called the auger, being provided with four short spokes by which it can be turned. As many men as can be collected are then set to work. Having divested themselves of all kinds of metals, they turn the pole two at a time by means of the levers, while others keep driving wedges under the upright post so as to press it against the auger, which by the friction soon becomes ignited. From this the need-fire is instantly procured, and all other fires being quenched, those that are rekindled both in

dwelling houses and offices are accounted sacred, and the diseased and bewitched cattle are successively made to smell them.

This contrivance is elaborate and its description not unnaturally awkward. It is however worthy of remark that in the initiation of Freemasons all metals are taken from them.

Water was worshipped by the Druids, and was used by them for purification. The Welsh peasantry hold sacred the rain-water which lodges in the crevices of their cromleachs or altars, and the Irish proverb "To take a dip in the Shannon," would seem to show that its waters were held in the same superstitious reverence as are those of the Ganges by the natives of Hindostan.

The Druids besprinkled themselves with dew when they went to sacrifice, and it is a belief among the English lasses that those who bathe their faces in the dew on May Day morning will have beautiful complexions.

It is a belief in Oxfordshire that to cure a man bitten by a mad dog, he should be taken to the sea and dipped therein nine times.

The regard still paid, however, to wells and fountains by the peasantry is the most extraordinary feature of water-worship. In the early ages it prevailed with such strength, that the Roman Catholics fearing to combat the custom christianized it by giving the holy wells the names of popular saints, and by enjoining pilgrimages after the Pagan fashion to their shrine.

In some parts of England it is still customary to decorate these wells with boughs of trees, garlands of tulips, and other flowers placed in various fancied devices.

At one time, indeed it was the custom on Holy Thursday, after the service for the day at the church, for the clergyman and singers to pray and sing psalms at these wells.

Pilgrimages are still made by invalids among the poor Irish to wells, whose waters are supposed to possess medicinal properties under the influence of some beneficent saint.

The well of Strathfillan in Scotland is also resorted to at certain periods of the year. The water of the well of Trinity Gask in Perthshire is supposed to cure any one seized with the plague. In many parts of Wales the water used for the baptismal font is fetched from these holy wells.

Not only a reverence, but actual sacrifices are offered to some of these wells and to the saints which preside over them, or to the spirits which are supposed to inhabit them.

In a quillet, called Gwern Degla, near the village of Llandegla in Wales there is a small spring. The water is under the tutelage of St. Tecla and is esteemed a sovereign remedy for the falling sickness. The patient washes his limbs in the well, makes an offering into it of fourpence, walks round it three times, and thrice repeats the Lord's

prayer. If a man, he sacrifices a cock; if a woman a hen. The fowl is carried in a basket first round the well, after that into the churchyard and round the church. The votary then enters the church, gets under the communion table, lies down with the Bible under his head, is covered with a cloth and rests there till break of day. When he departs, he offers sixpence and leaves the fowl in the church. If the bird dies, the cure is supposed to have been affected and the disease transferred to the devoted victim.

The custom of sticking bits of rag on thorns near these wells is inexplicable, as it is universal. Between the walls of Alten and Newton, near the foot of Rosberrye Toppinge, there is a well dedicated to St. Oswald. The neighbors have a belief that a shirt or shift taken off a sick person and thrown into the well will prognosticate his fate. If it floats the person will recover, if it sinks he will die. And to reward the saint for his intelligence, they tear a rag off the shirt and leave it hanging -on the briars thereabouts, "where" says Grose, citing a MS. in the Cotton Library, marked Julius F. vi. "I have seen such numbers as might have made a fayre rheme in a pajermyll."

That the Highlanders still believe in spirits which inhabit their lakes is easily proved. In Strathspey there is a lake called Loch nan Spiordan, the Lake of Spirits. When its waters are agitated by the wind and its spray mounts whirling in the air, they believe that it is the anger of this spirit whom they name Martach Shine, or the Rider of the Storm.

The Well of St. Keyne in the parish of St. Keyne, in Cornwall, is supposed to possess a curious property which is humorously explained in the following verses

THE WELL OF ST. KEYNE.

A well there is in the west country,
And a clearer one never was seen
There is not a wife in the west country
But has heard of the Well of St. Keyne.

An oak and an elm tree stand beside,
And behind doth an ash tree grow,
And a willow from the bank above
Droops to the water below.

A traveler came to the Well of St. Keyne,
Pleasant it was to his eye;
For from cock-crow he had been traveling,
and there was not a cloud in the sky.

He drank of the water so cool and clear,
For thirsty and hot was he;
And he sat him down upon the bank,
Under the willow tree.

There came a man from a neighboring town,
At the well to fill his pail;
On the well-side he rested it,
And bade the stranger hail.

Now, art thou a bachelor, stranger? quoth he,
For an if thou hast a wife,
The happiest draught thou hast drank this day
That ever thou didst in thy life.

Or has your good woman, if one you have,
In Cornwall ever been?
For an if she have, I'll venture my life,
She has drunk of the Well of St. Keyne.

I have left a good woman who never was here,
The stranger he made reply;
But that my draught should be better for that,
I pray thee tell me why.

St. Keyne, quoth the countryman, many a time,
Drank of this chrystal well;
And before the angel summoned her,
She laid on the water a spell.

If the husband, (of this gifted well),
Shall drink before his wife,
A happy man thenceforth is he,
For he shall be master for life.

But if the wife should drink of it first,
God help the husband then!
The stranger stooped to the well of St. Keyne,
And drank of its waters again.

You drank of the well I warrant betimes?
He to the countryman said,
But the countryman smiled as the stranger spoke,
And sheepishly shook his head.

I hastened as soon as the wedding was done.
And left my wife in the porch,
But i'faith I found her wiser than me,
For she took a bottle to church.

I must not omit to mention a method of divination by water, which is practiced at Madern

Well in the parish of Madern, and at the well of St. Ennys, in the parish of Sancred, Cornwall. At a certain period of the year, moon or day, come the uneasy, impatient and superstitious, and by dropping pins or pebbles into the water, and by shaking the ground round the spring so as to raise bubbles from the bottom, endeavor to predict the future. This practice is not indigenous to Britain. The Castalian fountain in Greece was supposed to be of a prophetic nature. By dipping a mirror into a well the Patræans received, as they supposed, omens of ensuing sickness or health from the figures portrayed upon its surface. In Laconia, they cast into a lake, sacred to Juno, three stones, and drew prognostications from the several turns which they made in sinking.

I will translate at length a pretty French story which I have met with, and which will adorn as well as illustrate the present subject:--

THE LEGEND OF THE PIN.

In the West of France the pin is endowed with a fabulous power, which is not without a certain interest. One of its supposed attributes is the power of attracting lovers to her who possess it, after it has been used in the toilet of a bride. Consequently it is a curious sight in La Vendée or Les Deux-Sèvres, to see all the peasant girls anxiously placing a pin in the bride's dress: the number being often so considerable that she is forced to have a pin-cushion attached to her waist-band to receive all the prickly charms. At night, on the threshold of the bridal chamber, she is surrounded by her companions, each one easily seizing upon the charmed pin, which is kept as a sacred relic.

In Brittany the pin is regarded as the guardian of chastity, a mute witness which will one day stand forth to applaud or condemn in the following manner:--

Some days before the wedding, the betrothed leads his future bride to the edge of some mysterious current of water, and taking one of her pins drops it into the water. If it swims, the girl's innocence is incontestable--if on the contrary it sinks to the bottom, it is considered the judgment of heaven; it is an accusation which no evidence can overcome. But as the peasant girls in Brittany never use any pins heavier than the long blackthorn, which they find in the hedges, the severity of the tribunal is not very formidable.

On the 7th of December, a young peasant mounted on a strong cob, full of hope and gaiety, was seen urging his way towards Morlaix with a handsome girl of twenty on a pillion behind him, her arm tenderly clasping his waist. It was easy to see in their happy faces that they were two lovers, and from the direction which they took, that they were going on a pilgrimage to try the charm of the pin at the fountain of St. Douet. Jean's father was one of the richest land-holders in the neighborhood, but above all the young ladies round him, he had chosen Margaret, whose sole wealth consisted in her beauty and virtue.

Through all the glades of the wood with wild thyme and violets beneath their horses

feet, they journeyed on till they came to a wild and deserted plain, whence they plunged once more into the dark forests of Finisterre filled with Druidical memories. It might have been those sombre shades which saddened them for a moment, but it was only for a moment. Jean feared not the trial, for he loved Margaret, and believed her to be an angel. And Margaret feared it not, for she knew that she was innocent.

Now they were close to the sacred fountain, which burst through the crevices of a rock overgrown with moss into a natural basin, and thence like a thread of silver through the forest.

They dismounted, and Margaret, kneeling down, prayed fervently for some moments. Then rising, she gave her left hand to her lover, and full of confidence, advanced toward the well. Alas! she had too much faith in the virtue of the legend. Instead of a thorn pin, she took from a neckerchief one with a silver head which he had given her. He pressed her fingers affectionately as he took it from her hand and dropped it into the well. It disappeared instantaneously. Margaret sank to the ground with a heart-broken groan.

He raised her and placed her on his horse, but he did not speak to her, he did not caress her. In mournful silence he walked by her side. Her arm could no longer embrace him. She was not his Margaret now. She was a guilty wretch who had dared to tempt the judgment of God.

He placed her down at her father's door, and stooping he kissed her on the forehead. It was a silent adieu he was bidding her; it was his last kiss - it was the kiss of death.

Next morning her corpse was found underneath his window. There were no marks of violence upon her body; the wound was in her heart; she had died a victim to a detestable superstition.

To the element of air we do not find our peasants pay any particular homage, unless the well-known practice of sailors of whistling for the wind in a dead calm, and of the Cornish laborers when engaged in winnowing may be regarded as such.

But the worship of the heavenly bodies has not yet died out among us! The astrologists of the middle ages were but copyists of the ancient Chaldeans, and the lower classes to this day draw omens from meteors and falling stars. General Vallancey, by the way, records a curious instance in his *Collectanea de rebus Hibernicis*, of an Irish peasant who could neither read nor write but who could calculate eclipses.

When we consider how universal and how prominent was the worship of the sun in the world, it is almost surprising that we do not find more vestiges of this idolatry. There are some few however.

It was once a custom of the vulgar to rise early on Easter Day to see the sun dance, for they fancied that the reflection of its beams played or danced upon the waters of any spring or lake they might look into.

In the British Apollo, fol. Lond. 1708, vol. i. No. 40, we read:

Q. Old wives, Phœbus, say
That on Easter day,
To the music o'the spheres you do caper,
If the fact, sir, be true,
Pray let's the cause know,
When you have any room in your paper.

A. The old wives get merry,
With spic'd ale or sherry,
On Easter, which makes them romance
And whilst in a rout,
Their brains whirl about,
They fancy we caper and dance.

The sun shining on the bride as she goes to church is a good omen. The cloudy rising of the sun is a presage of misfortune. The Highlanders, when they approach a well to drink, walk round it from east to west, sometimes thrice.

The Orkney fishermen, on going to sea, would think themselves in imminent peril, were they by accident to turn their boat in opposition to the sun's course; and I have seen many well-educated people seriously discomfited if the cards from the pack, the balls from the pool-basket, or the decanters at the dining-table had not been sent round as the sun goes.

All the ancient dances were in imitation of the revolutions of the heavenly bodies, and were used in religious worship. Such were the circular dances of the Druids--the slower and statelier movements of the Greek strophe--the dances of the Cabiri or Phœnician priests, the devotional dances of the Turkish dervishes, the Hindoo Raas Jattrā or dance-of-the-circle, and the war dances of the American and other savage nations round their camp-fires, lodges, or triumphal poles.

Such also is the Round About, or Cheshire Round, which is referred to by Goldsmith in his Vicar of Wakefield, and which is not yet extinct in England.

But the best instance of sun-worship is found in the fires lighted by the common Irish on Midsummer's Eve, and which they tell you candidly are burnt "in honor of the sun."

The fires which the Scotch Highlanders light on May Day are to welcome back the sun after his long pilgrimage in the frosts and darkness of winter.

Crantz in his History of Greenland, informs us that the natives of that country observe a similar festival to testify their joy at the re-appearance of the sun, and the consequent renewal of the hunting season.

In matters of divination, the moon is supposed by the vulgar to possess a peculiar power. She was supposed to exercise an influence not only over the tides of the sea, and over the minds of men, but also over the future, in weather, cookery, and physic.

When the moon is encircled by a halo, or is involved in a mist, when she is called "greasy," it portends rain--when she is sharp horned, windy weather. It is also a general belief among all classes that as the weather is at the new moon, so it will continue during the whole month.

In many of the old almanacs and books of husbandry, it is directed to kill hogs when the moon is increasing, and the bacon will prove the better, in boiling; to shear sheep at the moon's increase; to fell hand-timber from the full to the change; to fell frith, coppice, and fuel at the first quarter; to geld cattle when the moon is in Aries, Sagittarius, or Capricorn.

In *The Husbandman's Practice, or Prognostication for ever*, the reader is advised "To purge with electuaries the moon in Cancer, with pills the moone in Pisces, with potions the moone in Virgo," and in another place, "To set, sow seeds, graft, and plant, the moone being in Taurus, Virgo or Capricorn, and all kinds of corne in Cancer, to graft in March, at the moone's increase, she being in Taurus or Capricorn."

Werenfels in his *Dissertation on Superstition*, speaking of a superstitious man, writes, "He will have his hair cut either when the moon is in Leo, that his locks may stare like the lion's shag, or in Aries that they may stare like a ram's horn. Whatever he would have to grow he sets about when she is in the increase; for whatever he would have made less he chooses her wane. When the moon is in Taurus, he can never be persuaded to take physic, lest that animal which chews its cud should make him cast it up again; and if at any time he has a mind to be admitted to the presence of a prince, he will wait till the moon is in conjunction with the sun, for 'tis then the society of an inferior with a superior is salutary and successful."

The islanders of Sky will not dig peats (which is their only fuel) in the increase of the moon, believing that they are less moist, and will burn more clearly if cut in the wane.

In the parishes of Kirkwall and St. Ola, Orkney, none marry or kill cattle in the wane.

In Angus it is believed that if a child be put from the breast during the waning of the moon, it will decay all the time that the moon continues to wane. I will mention two more instances of divination, one from Thomas Hodge's *Incarnate Divells*, viz., "That when the moone appeareth in the springtime, the one horn spotted and hidden with a blacke and great cloude from the first day of her apparition to the fourth day after, it is some signe of tempests and troubles in the aire the summer after."

When the new moon appears with the old moon in her arms, or in other words when that part of the moon which is covered by the shadow of the earth is seen through it, it is

considered not only an omen of bad weather, but also of misfortune, as we learn from the following stanza in the ballad of Sir Patrick Spence:

Late, late yestreen
I saw the new moone
Wi'the auld moone in her arme;
And I feir, I feir, my deir master,
That we will come to harm.

One might enumerate examples of this kind to volumes, and I fear I have already passed the limits of human endurance; I must, however, write a few words upon the subject of moon-worship.

The feminine appellation is traditionally derived from the fable of Isis, who was entitled the wife of the sun. The superstition of the man-in-the-moon, is supposed to have originated in the account given in the Book of Numbers, XV. 32 et seq. of a man punished with death for gathering sticks on the Sabbath Day, though why, it is difficult to explain. In Ritson's Ancient Songs we read, "The man-in-the-moon is represented leaning upon a fork, on which he carries a bush of thorn, because it was for 'pycchynde stake' on a Sunday that he is reported to have been thus confined." And in *Midsummer Night's Dream*, one of the actors says, "All I have to say is to tell you that the lantern is the moon, I the man-in-the-moon, this thorn bush my thorn bush, and this dog my dog." Vide also *Tempest*, act. ii. sc. 2.

The new moon still continues to be idolatrously worshipped by the vulgar of many countries.

On the night of the new moon, the Jews assemble to pray to God under the names of the Creator of the planets, and the restorer of the moon.

The Madingoe Tribe of African Indians whisper a short prayer with their hands held before their face; they then spit upon their hands and religiously anoint their faces with the same.

At the end of the Mahometan Feast of Rhamadan (which closely resembles the Romish Carnival) the priests await the reappearance of the moon, and salute her with clapping of hands, beating of drums and firing of muskets.

In the 65th Canon of the 6th council of Constantinople, A. D. 680, is the following interdiction: "Those bone-fires that are kindled by certaine people on new moones before their shops and houses, over which also they are most foolishly and ridiculously to leape by a certaine antient custom, we command them from henceforth to cease. Whoever therefore shall do any such thing, if he be a clergyman let him be deposed-if a layman let him be excommunicated."

No bonfires are now lit in honor of the new moon, but the common Irish on beholding

her for the first time cross themselves, saying:

May thou leave us as safe as thou hast found us.

English peasants often salute the new moon, saying: "There is the new moon, God bless her," usually seating themselves on a stile as they do so.

They also believe that a new moon seen over the right shoulder is lucky, over the left shoulder unlucky, and straight before good luck to the end of the moon.

That if they look straight at the new moon (or a shooting star) when they first see it, and wish for something, their wish will be fulfilled before the end of the year.

The peasant girls, in some parts of England, when they see the new moon in the new year, take their stocking off from one foot and run to the next stile; when they get there, they look between the great toe and the next, and expect to find a hair which will be the color of their lover's.

In Yorkshire, it is common enough for an inquisitive maid to go out into a field till she finds a stone fast in the earth, to kneel upon this with naked knees and looking up at the new moon to say:

All hail, new moon, all hail to thee,
I prithee, good moon, reveal to me
This night, who shall my true love be,
Who he is, and what he wears,
And what he does all months and years.

She then retires backwards till she comes to a stile, and goes to bed directly without speaking a word.

The Irish believe that eclipses of the moon are effected by witchcraft, and this occasions me to narrate a curious custom of the ancient Peruvians who were the Egyptians of the New World.

When the moon became eclipsed, they imagined that she was ill and would fall down and crush the world. Accordingly as soon as the eclipse commenced, they made a noise with cornets and drums, and tying dogs to trees beat them till they howled in order to awake the fainting moon who is said to love these animals, for Diana and Nehalenna are seldom represented without a dog by their side.

Since we find in a book, called Osborne's Advice to his Son, p. 79, that "the Irish and Welch during eclipses ran about beating kettles and pans, thinking their clamor and vexations available to the assistance of the higher orbes," it is probable that they made use of the same canine resources as the natives of Peru, and that such is the origin of the Irish proverb that "dogs will bark at the moon."

Having thus considered the worship of the elements and of the heavenly bodies extant among us, let us pass on to those minor idolatries which are still retained among the lower orders.

There is no religious custom of the Russians so celebrated as that of presenting each other with eggs dyed and stained, saying, "Christ is risen." To which the other replies "He is indeed," and they exchange kisses.

An egg was the Egyptian emblem of the universe, and it was from the Egyptians that all the Pagan nations, and afterwards the Greek Christians derived this ceremony. They are used also by the Roman Catholics and by the Jews in their Paschal festival.

It is probable that it was also a Druidic ceremony, for it prevails in Cumberland and many other counties of England. On Easter Monday and Tuesday the inhabitants assemble in the meadows, the children provided with hard boiled eggs, colored or ornamented in various ways, some being dyed with logwood or cochineal; others tinged with the juice of herbs and broom-flowers; others stained by being boiled in shreds of parti-colored riband; and others covered with gilding. They roll them along the ground, or toss them in the air till they break when they eat them-a part of the ceremony which they probably understand the best. They are called pace-eggs or paste-eggs, probably corrupted from pasche.

This reminds us of the strange fable of the serpent's egg. As I mentioned in an earlier chapter many of these eggs or adder-stones are preserved with great reverence in the Highlands. There are also some traditions upon this subject which are worth narrating.

Monsieur Chorier in his *Histoire de Dauphiné* informs us that in the divers parts of that county, especially near the mountain of Rochelle on the borders of Savoy, serpents congregate from the 15th of June to the 15th of August for purposes of generation. The place which they have occupied after they have gone, is covered with a sticky white foam which is indescribably disgusting to behold.

Camden relates that in most parts of Wales and throughout Scotland and Cornwall, it is an opinion of the vulgar that about Midsummer Eve the snakes meet together in companies, and that by joining heads together and hissing, a kind of bubble is formed which the rest by continual hissing blow on till it quite passes through the body, when it immediately hardens and resembles a glass ring which will make its finder prosperous in all his undertakings. The rings thus generated are called *gleinu madroeth*, or snake stones. They are small glass amulets commonly about half as wide as our finger rings, but much thicker, of a green color usually though sometimes blue and waved with red and white.

Careu in his *Survey of Cornwall* says that its inhabitants believe that snakes breathing upon a hazel wand produce a stone ring of a blue color, in which there appears the yellow figure of a snake, and that beasts which have been bit by a mad dog or

poisoned, if given some water to drink wherein this stone has been infused, will perfectly recover.

The following custom is evidently a dramatic representation of the rape of the serpent's egg à la Pliny:

On Easter Monday, in Normandy, the common people congregate à la motte de Pougard which they surround. They place at the foot a basket containing a hundred eggs, the number of the stones of the temple of Aubury. A man takes the eggs and places them singly on the top of the tumulus, and then descends in the same manner to return them to the basket. While this is doing, another man runs to a village half a league off, and if he can return before the last egg is restored to the basket, he gains a barrel of cider as a prize, which he empties with the co-operation of his friends, and a Bacchanalian dance round the tumulus ends the proceedings.

Serpent-worship is almost extinct, if not entirely so; . and the belief of the lower orders in Ireland that St. Patrick expelled all the snakes and other reptiles from the island is perhaps derived from his having extinguished their adorers.

However, it is considered unlucky in England to kill the harmless green snake; and there is a superstition almost universally present, that it will not die till the setting of that sun, of which it was an emblem.

Its tenacity of life is indeed something marvelous. Mr. Payne Knight, in his work on Phallic worship, (which I read at the British Museum, but which is somewhat absurdly excluded from the catalogue) states that he has seen the heart of an adder throb for some moments after it had been completely taken from the body, and even renew its beatings ten minutes afterwards when dipped in hot water.

Many of our ladies wear bracelets in the shape of a snake, as did the Egyptian dames of old. The lower orders believe that a serpent's skin will extract thorns, and its fat is sold to London chemists at five shillings a pound for its medicinal properties.

Most curious of all, is the superstition that by eating snakes one may grow young, and of which the three following passages are illustrations.

"A gentlewoman told an ancient bachelor, who looked very young, that she thought he had eaten a snake. No mistress, (he said) it is because I never meddled with any snakes which maketh me look so young."--Holy State, 1642, p. 36.

He hath left off o' late to feed on snakes,
His beard's turned white again.

Massinger, Old Law. Act V. Sc. 1.

He is your loving brother, sir, and will tell nobody

But all he meets, that you have eat a snake,
And are grown young, gamesome, and rampant.

Ibid, Elder Brother, Act IV., Sc- 4-

Of stone worship there are still many vestiges. In a little island near Skye is a chapel dedicated to St. Columbus; on an altar is a round blue stone which is always moist. Fishermen, detained by contrary winds, bathe this stone in water, expecting thereby to obtain favorable winds; it is likewise applied to the sides of people troubled with stitches, and it is held so holy, that decisive oaths are sworn upon it.

There is a stone in the parish of Madren, Cornwall, through which many persons are wont to creep for pains in the back and limbs, and through which children are drawn for the rickets. In the North, children are drawn through a hole cut in the Groaning Cheese, a huge stone, on the day they are christened.

To go into the cleft of a rock was an ancient method of penitence and purification. It may be remembered that in the tradition of Hiram Abiff, the assassins were found concealed in a hollow rock, in which they were lamenting their crime.

To sleep on stones on particular nights is a cure for lameness with our peasants, though perhaps a hazardous one, especially if the disease originated from rheumatism.

A Druidic monument of great historical interest is to be seen under the coronation chair in Westminster Abbey. Originally called Liag-fial, the Fatal Stone, by others Cloch na cineamhna or the Stone of Fortune, it was that upon which the Kings of Ireland used to be inaugurated, and which, being enclosed in a wooden chair, was, by the ingenuity of the Druids, made to emit a sound under the rightful candidate, and mute under a man of bad title. It was superstitiously sent to confirm the Irish colony in Scotland, and it continued at Scone as the coronation of the Scotch Kings, from the commencement of the Christian Era till 1300 A. D., when Edward I. imported it into England. It is still a superstition in the Highlands that those who lay their hands against the Druids' stones will not prosper.

Many of these monuments are approached with great reverence by the natives of Scotland and the Isles, especially the Tighe nan Druidhneach in the Isle of Skye, little arched, round stone buildings capable of holding one, where the contemplative Druid sat when his oak could not shelter him from the weather. The common people never pass these without walking round them three times from east to west.

In Chartres, which teems with Druidic vestiges, a curious specimen of stone worship remains. At the close of service in the cathedral, no one leaves the church without kneeling and saying a short prayer before a small pillar or stone--without polish, base or capital--placed in a niche, and much worn on one side by the kisses of the devout. This stone is rumored to be of high antiquity, even earlier than the establishment of Christianity--for many centuries to have remained in a crypt of the cathedral where

lamps were constantly burning--but the stairs having been much worn on one side by the great resort of pilgrims to the spot, the stone had been removed from its original site, to avoid the expenses of repairs. It was said to be a miraculous stone, and that its miracles were performed at the intercession of the Virgin Mary.

There is a certain reverence paid by the peasantry to those caves in which the Druids held their initiatory rites. Many of them are said to be inhabited by spirits, and there is one in the neighborhood of Dunskey, Scotland, which is held in peculiar veneration. At the change of the moon it is usual to bring even from a great distance infirm persons, and particularly rickety children whom they supposed bewitched, to bathe in a stream which flows from the hill, and then to dry them in the cave.

As among the Druids it is still customary to place a platter of salt and earth upon the breast of the corpse in many parts of Britain. Salt was held in great reverence by the Eastern nations as an emblem of incorruptibility. So among us to spill salt is considered unlucky; it was only the other day that I saw a talented and well educated lady overwhelmed with consternation at this mishap, but with admirable presence of mind she flung a pinch over her left shoulder and so recovered her self-possession.

Hare was forbidden to the ancient Britons by their religion, and to this day the Cornish eat it with reluctance. Boadicea also augured from the running of a hare; and a hare that runs across a path (to any one but a sportsman, or rather a pot-hunter) is an omen of ill-luck.

The onion was an emblem of the deity among the Egyptians, perhaps also among the Druids, for it is a custom in some parts of England for girls to divine by it, as Barnaby Googe in his translation of Naogeorgus' Popish Kingdome informs us.

In these same days young wanton gyrles that meete for marriage be,
Doe search to know the names of them that shall their husbands bee;
Four onyons, five, or eight, they take, and make in every one
Such names as they do fancie most, and best to think upon,
Thus nere the chimney them they set, and that same Onyon then
That firste doth sproute, doth surely bear the name of their good man.

In matters of dress, there are not many traces of the Druids and the ancient Britons to be found.

The caps of rushes, however, which they wore tied at the top and twisted into a band at the bottom, may still be seen upon the heads of children in Wales and some parts of England. In Shetland, the ancient sandals of untanned skins are worn, and also, by fishermen in cold weather, the Druidic wooden shoes. I could not discover their real origin during my visit there: some said they had been imported by the Dutch, others that the Dutch had borrowed the idea from them; but in any case these wooden shoes, the sabots of the lower orders of France, are derived from the Druids.

The best instance of dress however, is the Highland plaid, which was the very garment worn by the Druid Abaris, on his visit to Athens, and which is an extraordinary example of savage conservatism. From the breachan of the Gauls and Britons, is derived our word breeches and also that inelegant but necessary article of clothing.

Upon the subject of words I will also remark that our word fortnight or fourteen nights, is derived from the Druidic habit of counting time by nights instead of days; and the word dizzy from their deisul, or circular dance, (in Hebrew dizzel). I could give a multitude more, but ohe! jam satis est.

A very curious memorial of Druidism in the very bosom of victorious Christianity was discovered a few years ago by the well-known French Antiquary, M. Hersart de la Villemarqué. It is a fragment of Latin poetry which all the children in the parish of Nizon, Canton de Pont-Aven, are taught to sing at school and in church. The original poetry is almost the same as its Latin adaptation, except that in the latter various biblical allusions have been slipped in.

I will give the first strophe of the original, then its translation in the French of M. Villemarqué which is too good for me to meddle with, and then the Latin hymn as sung by the children

ANN DROUIZ.

Daik mab gwerd Drouiz; ore;
Daik petra fell d'id-dei
Petra ganinn-me d'id-de.

AR MAP

Kan d'in euz a eur raun,
Ken a ouffenn breman.

LE DRUIDE.

Tout beau enfant blanc du Druide, tout beau réponds-moi; que veux-tu? te chanterai-je?

L'ENFANT.

Chante-moi la division du nombre un jusqu'à ce que je l'apprenne aujourd'hui.

LE DRUIDE.

Pas de division pour le nombre un, la nécessité uni que; la mort père de la douleur; rien avant, rien après. Tout beau, &c.

L'ENFANT.

Chante-moi la division du nombre deux, &c.

LE DRUIDE.

Deux bœufs attelés à une coque; ils tirent, ils vont expirer--Voyez la merveille!

Pas de division, &c.

L'ENFANT.

Chante-moi la division du nombre trois, &c.

LE DRUIDE.

Il y a trois parties dans le monde; trois commencements et trois fins pour l'homme, comme pour le chêne; trois cêlestes, royaumes de Merlin; fruits d'or, fleurs brillantes, petits enfants qui rient.

Deux bœufs, &c.

Pas de division, &c.

The christianized version in Latin is as follows:

L'ENFANT.

Dic mihi quid unus,
Dic mihi quid unus.

LE MAITRE.

Unus est Deus,
Qui regnat in Cœlis.

L'ENFANT.

Dic mihi quid duo.
Dic mihi quid duo.

LE MAITRE.

Duo testamenta,
Unus est Deus,
Qui regnat in Cœlis.

L'ENFANT.

Dic mihi qui sunt tres
Dic mihi que sunt tres.

LE MAITRE.

Tres sunt patriarchæ,
Duo sunt testamenta;
Unus est deus,
Qui regnat in Cœlis.

Both of these dialogues are continued to the number twelve. In the Druidic version containing precepts on theology, cosmogony, chronology, astronomy, geography, magic, medicine and history. The Latin version teaching that there is one God, two testaments, three prophets, four evangelists, five books of Moses, six pitchers at the marriage of Cana, seven sacraments, eight beatitudes, nine choirs of angels, ten commandments, eleven stars which appeared to Joseph, and twelve apostles.

The resemblance of style and precept throughout is very striking, and a discovery which I have made of the same nature renders it still more surprising.

There is a peculiar song of the Oxfordshire peasants, the meaning of which had often perplexed me and which of course those who sung it were the least able to explain.

It is sung in this manner. One of them begins:--

I will sing you my one O!

To which the rest sing in chorus.

What is your one O!

And he sings.

One is all alone,
And ever doth remam so.

The song continues to the number twelve, each verse repeated after each as in the original versions above. Most of these verses are local corruptions, and it is probable that in some parts of England a purer version is retained. However, since the first refers to the One Deity, the second to "two white boys clothed in green," the fourth to "four gospel preachers," the seventh to the "seven stars," &c., there can be no doubt as to its origin.

There is so superstitious a reverence paid by the lower orders in many parts of Britain to bees, that one is almost inclined to suppose that they also were held sacred by the Druids.

The Cornishmen consider bees too sacred to be bought. In other counties, on the death of their proprietor, a ceremonious announcement of the fact is made to them and a piece of funeral cake presented to them. It is believed that were this omitted they would fly away. In Lithuania a similar practice prevails.

There is no clue to this, except in the circumstance that the bee-hive is one of the emblems of Freemasonry, and like many other Druidic and Masonic symbols, e.g. the seven stars, the cross-keys, &c., a favorite tavern sign. For instance the one at Abingdon, under which is written the following jocose distich:

Within this hive were all alive,
Good liquor makes us funny,
So if your dry, come in and try,
The flavor of our honey.

From the apple-tree the Druids were wont to cut their divining rods. And to this tree at Christmas, in Devon, Cornwall and other counties a curious ceremony is paid. The farmer and his laborers soak cakes in cider, and place them on the trenches of an apple tree, and sprinkling the tree repeat the following incantation :

Here's to thee, old apple tree!
Whence thou mayst bud, and whence thou mayest blow.
Hats full! Caps full?
Bushel, bushel, sacks full!
And my pockets full too! Huzza!

After which they dance round the tree and get drunk on the cider which remains. They believe that if they did not do this the tree would not bear.

I have now to consider the vestiges of mistletoe-worship extant among the descendants of the Druids.

On Christmas Eve it was lately the custom at York to carry mistletoe to the high altar of the Cathedral, and to proclaim a public and universal liberty, pardon and freedom to all sorts of inferior and even wicked people at the gates of the city towards the four quarters of heaven.

The mistletoe was considered of great medicinal virtue by Sir John Coldbatch for epilepsy and other convulsive disorders. The mistletoe of the oak is used by the common people for wind ruptures in children.

Like the houzza! of the East, the mistletoe would seem to have a religious exclamation, as I judge from finding it so often the refrain to old French songs, especially this one :

O gué la bonne adventure, O gué.

And in one celebrated English ballad:

O the mistletoe bough! and O the mistletoe bough!

It is still a custom in many parts of France for children to run down the street on New Year's Day, and to rap the doors crying "Au gui l'an né, or Au gui, l'an neuf."

In the island of Sein, there is a mistletoe feast which it is believed has been perpetuated by the Bas Breton tailors who, strange to say, have been formed from time immemorial into a fine association. They are poets, musicians and wizards who never contract marriages with strangers, and who have a language of their own, called lueache which they will not speak in the presence of foreigners.

At this feast there is a procession. An altar covered with green boughs is erected in the centre of a circular space of ground. Thence they start, and thither marching round the island return. Two fiddlers form the vanguard; they are followed by children carrying bill-hooks and oak-branches, and leading an ox and a horse covered with flowers. After them a huge crowd which stops at intervals crying Gui-na-né voilà le Gui.

There is one more mistletoe custom which I had almost forgotten. Let us imagine ourselves in the hall of some old-fashioned country mansion. Let it be Christmas- night, and at that hour when merriment and wine has flushed every face, and glowed into every heart.

And now I will paint to you a young maiden who embraced in the arms of her lover is whirled round the hall, her eyes sparkling, her white bosom heaving and her little feet scarce seeming to touch the floor. They pause for a moment. An old lady with an arch twinkle in her eye whispers something to her partner, he nods and smiles; she blushes and turns her eyes, pretending not to hear.

They join the dance again, when suddenly he stays her in the centre of the hall. Above their heads droops down a beautiful plant with pale white berries and leaves of a delicate green. He stoops and gives her the kiss-under-the-mistletoe. All laugh and follow his example till the scene vies the revels of the ancient Bacchanals.

It is this picture which awakes me from a reverie into which I have long been buried. Reader! you have sought with me for the first germs of religion in the chaos of youthful Time; you have dived with me into those mysteries which the Veil of Isis held secret from our sight; you have sojourned with me among the tombs of the past, and trod upon the dust of a fallen World.

Let us now return from these caverns of learning to the glorious day-light of the Present, and to the enjoyments, of a real existence.

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Welsh Fairy Book, public domain image

The Welsh Fairy Book
by W. Jenkyn Thomas
[1908]
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Idylls of the King by Alfred, Lord Tennyson

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Dedication

These to His Memory--since he held them dear,
Perchance as finding there unconsciously
Some image of himself--I dedicate,
I dedicate, I consecrate with tears--
These Idylls.

And indeed He seems to me
Scarce other than my king's ideal knight,
`Who revered his conscience as his king;
Whose glory was, redressing human wrong;
Who spake no slander, no, nor listened to it;
Who loved one only and who clave to her--'
Her--over all whose realms to their last isle,
Commingled with the gloom of imminent war,
The shadow of His loss drew like eclipse,
Darkening the world. We have lost him: he is gone:
We know him now: all narrow jealousies
Are silent; and we see him as he moved,
How modest, kindly, all-accomplished, wise,
With what sublime repression of himself,
And in what limits, and how tenderly;
Not swaying to this faction or to that;
Not making his high place the lawless perch
Of winged ambitions, nor a vantage-ground
For pleasure; but through all this tract of years
Wearing the white flower of a blameless life,
Before a thousand peering littlenesses,
In that fierce light which beats upon a throne,
And blackens every blot: for where is he,
Who dares foreshadow for an only son
A lovelier life, a more unstained, than his?
Or how should England dreaming of HIS sons
Hope more for these than some inheritance
Of such a life, a heart, a mind as thine,
Thou noble Father of her Kings to be,
Laborious for her people and her poor--
Voice in the rich dawn of an ampler day--
Far-sighted summoner of War and Waste
To fruitful strifes and rivalries of peace--
Sweet nature gilded by the gracious gleam
Of letters, dear to Science, dear to Art,
Dear to thy land and ours, a Prince indeed,
Beyond all titles, and a household name,
Hereafter, through all times, Albert the Good.

Break not, O woman's-heart, but still endure;
Break not, for thou art Royal, but endure,
Remembering all the beauty of that star
Which shone so close beside Thee that ye made
One light together, but has past and leaves
The Crown a lonely splendour.

May all love,
His love, unseen but felt, o'ershadow Thee,
The love of all Thy sons encompass Thee,
The love of all Thy daughters cherish Thee,
The love of all Thy people comfort Thee,
Till God's love set Thee at his side again!

The Coming of Arthur

Leodogran, the King of Cameliard,
Had one fair daughter, and none other child;
And she was the fairest of all flesh on earth,
Guinevere, and in her his one delight.

For many a petty king ere Arthur came
Ruled in this isle, and ever waging war
Each upon other, wasted all the land;
And still from time to time the heathen host
Swarmed overseas, and harried what was left.
And so there grew great tracts of wilderness,
Wherein the beast was ever more and more,
But man was less and less, till Arthur came.
For first Aurelius lived and fought and died,
And after him King Uther fought and died,
But either failed to make the kingdom one.
And after these King Arthur for a space,
And through the puissance of his Table Round,
Drew all their petty princeloms under him.
Their king and head, and made a realm, and reigned.

And thus the land of Cameliard was waste,
Thick with wet woods, and many a beast therein,

And none or few to scare or chase the beast;
So that wild dog, and wolf and boar and bear
Came night and day, and rooted in the fields,
And wallowed in the gardens of the King.
And ever and anon the wolf would steal
The children and devour, but now and then,
Her own brood lost or dead, lent her fierce teat
To human sucklings; and the children, housed
In her foul den, there at their meat would growl,
And mock their foster mother on four feet,
Till, straightened, they grew up to wolf-like men,
Worse than the wolves. And King Leodogran
Groaned for the Roman legions here again,
And Csar's eagle: then his brother king,
Urien, assailed him: last a heathen horde,
Reddening the sun with smoke and earth with blood,
And on the spike that split the mother's heart
Spitting the child, brake on him, till, amazed,
He knew not whither he should turn for aid.

But--for he heard of Arthur newly crowned,
Though not without an uproar made by those
Who cried, 'He is not Uther's son'--the King
Sent to him, saying, 'Arise, and help us thou!
For here between the man and beast we die.'

And Arthur yet had done no deed of arms,
But heard the call, and came: and Guinevere
Stood by the castle walls to watch him pass;
But since he neither wore on helm or shield
The golden symbol of his kinglihood,
But rode a simple knight among his knights,
And many of these in richer arms than he,
She saw him not, or marked not, if she saw,
One among many, though his face was bare.
But Arthur, looking downward as he past,
Felt the light of her eyes into his life
Smite on the sudden, yet rode on, and pitched
His tents beside the forest. Then he drave
The heathen; after, slew the beast, and felled
The forest, letting in the sun, and made
Broad pathways for the hunter and the knight
And so returned.

For while he lingered there,
A doubt that ever smouldered in the hearts

Of those great Lords and Barons of his realm
Flashed forth and into war: for most of these,
Colleguing with a score of petty kings,
Made head against him, crying, 'Who is he
That he should rule us? who hath proven him
King Uther's son? for lo! we look at him,
And find nor face nor bearing, limbs nor voice,
Are like to those of Uther whom we knew.
This is the son of Gorlos, not the King;
This is the son of Anton, not the King.'

And Arthur, passing thence to battle, felt
Travail, and throes and agonies of the life,
Desiring to be joined with Guinevere;
And thinking as he rode, 'Her father said
That there between the man and beast they die.
Shall I not lift her from this land of beasts
Up to my throne, and side by side with me?
What happiness to reign a lonely king,
Vext--O ye stars that shudder over me,
O earth that soundest hollow under me,
Vext with waste dreams? for saving I be joined
To her that is the fairest under heaven,
I seem as nothing in the mighty world,
And cannot will my will, nor work my work
Wholly, nor make myself in mine own realm
Victor and lord. But were I joined with her,
Then might we live together as one life,
And reigning with one will in everything
Have power on this dark land to lighten it,
And power on this dead world to make it live.'

Thereafter--as he speaks who tells the tale--
When Arthur reached a field-of-battle bright
With pitched pavilions of his foe, the world
Was all so clear about him, that he saw
The smallest rock far on the faintest hill,
And even in high day the morning star.
So when the King had set his banner broad,
At once from either side, with trumpet-blast,
And shouts, and clarions shrilling unto blood,
The long-lanced battle let their horses run.
And now the Barons and the kings prevailed,
And now the King, as here and there that war
Went swaying; but the Powers who walk the world
Made lightnings and great thunders over him,

And dazed all eyes, till Arthur by main might,
And mightier of his hands with every blow,
And leading all his knighthood threw the kings
Cardos, Urien, Cradlemon of Wales,
Claudias, and Clariance of Northumberland,
The King Brandagoras of Latangor,
With Anguisant of Erin, Morganore,
And Lot of Orkney. Then, before a voice
As dreadful as the shout of one who sees
To one who sins, and deems himself alone
And all the world asleep, they swerved and brake
Flying, and Arthur called to stay the brands
That hacked among the flyers, 'Ho! they yield!'
So like a painted battle the war stood
Silenced, the living quiet as the dead,
And in the heart of Arthur joy was lord.
He laughed upon his warrior whom he loved
And honoured most. 'Thou dost not doubt me King,
So well thine arm hath wrought for me today.'
'Sir and my liege,' he cried, 'the fire of God
Descends upon thee in the battle-field:
I know thee for my King!' Whereat the two,
For each had warded either in the fight,
Swore on the field of death a deathless love.
And Arthur said, 'Man's word is God in man:
Let chance what will, I trust thee to the death.'

Then quickly from the foughten field he sent
Ulfius, and Brastias, and Bedivere,
His new-made knights, to King Leodogran,
Saying, 'If I in aught have served thee well,
Give me thy daughter Guinevere to wife.'

Whom when he heard, Leodogran in heart
Debating--'How should I that am a king,
However much he help me at my need,
Give my one daughter saving to a king,
And a king's son?'--lifted his voice, and called
A hoary man, his chamberlain, to whom
He trusted all things, and of him required
His counsel: 'Knowest thou aught of Arthur's birth?'

Then spake the hoary chamberlain and said,
'Sir King, there be but two old men that know:
And each is twice as old as I; and one
Is Merlin, the wise man that ever served

King Uther through his magic art; and one
Is Merlin's master (so they call him) Bleys,
Who taught him magic, but the scholar ran
Before the master, and so far, that Bleys,
Laid magic by, and sat him down, and wrote
All things and whatsoever Merlin did
In one great annal-book, where after-years
Will learn the secret of our Arthur's birth.'

To whom the King Leodogran replied,
`O friend, had I been holpen half as well
By this King Arthur as by thee today,
Then beast and man had had their share of me:
But summon here before us yet once more
Ulfius, and Brastias, and Bedivere.'

Then, when they came before him, the King said,
`I have seen the cuckoo chased by lesser fowl,
And reason in the chase: but wherefore now
Do these your lords stir up the heat of war,
Some calling Arthur born of Gorlos,
Others of Anton? Tell me, ye yourselves,
Hold ye this Arthur for King Uther's son?'

And Ulfius and Brastias answered, `Ay.'
Then Bedivere, the first of all his knights
Knighted by Arthur at his crowning, spake--
For bold in heart and act and word was he,
Whenever slander breathed against the King--

`Sir, there be many rumours on this head:
For there be those who hate him in their hearts,
Call him baseborn, and since his ways are sweet,
And theirs are bestial, hold him less than man:
And there be those who deem him more than man,
And dream he dropt from heaven: but my belief
In all this matter--so ye care to learn--
Sir, for ye know that in King Uther's time
The prince and warrior Gorlos, he that held
Tintagil castle by the Cornish sea,
Was wedded with a winsome wife, Ygerne:
And daughters had she borne him,--one whereof,
Lot's wife, the Queen of Orkney, Bellicent,
Hath ever like a loyal sister cleaved
To Arthur,--but a son she had not borne.
And Uther cast upon her eyes of love:

But she, a stainless wife to Gorlos,
So loathed the bright dishonour of his love,
That Gorlos and King Uther went to war:
And overthrown was Gorlos and slain.
Then Uther in his wrath and heat besieged
Ygerne within Tintagil, where her men,
Seeing the mighty swarm about their walls,
Left her and fled, and Uther entered in,
And there was none to call to but himself.
So, compassed by the power of the King,
Enforced was she to wed him in her tears,
And with a shameful swiftness: afterward,
Not many moons, King Uther died himself,
Moaning and wailing for an heir to rule
After him, lest the realm should go to wrack.
And that same night, the night of the new year,
By reason of the bitterness and grief
That vexed his mother, all before his time
Was Arthur born, and all as soon as born
Delivered at a secret postern-gate
To Merlin, to be holden far apart
Until his hour should come; because the lords
Of that fierce day were as the lords of this,
Wild beasts, and surely would have torn the child
Piecemeal among them, had they known; for each
But sought to rule for his own self and hand,
And many hated Uther for the sake
Of Gorlos. Wherefore Merlin took the child,
And gave him to Sir Anton, an old knight
And ancient friend of Uther; and his wife
Nursed the young prince, and reared him with her own;
And no man knew. And ever since the lords
Have foughten like wild beasts among themselves,
So that the realm has gone to wrack: but now,
This year, when Merlin (for his hour had come)
Brought Arthur forth, and set him in the hall,
Proclaiming, "Here is Uther's heir, your king,"
A hundred voices cried, "Away with him!
No king of ours! a son of Gorlos he,
Or else the child of Anton, and no king,
Or else baseborn." Yet Merlin through his craft,
And while the people clamoured for a king,
Had Arthur crowned; but after, the great lords
Banded, and so brake out in open war.'

Then while the King debated with himself

If Arthur were the child of shamefulness,
Or born the son of Gorlos, after death,
Or Uther's son, and born before his time,
Or whether there were truth in anything
Said by these three, there came to Cameliard,
With Gawain and young Modred, her two sons,
Lot's wife, the Queen of Orkney, Bellicent;
Whom as he could, not as he would, the King
Made feast for, saying, as they sat at meat,

`A doubtful throne is ice on summer seas.
Ye come from Arthur's court. Victor his men
Report him! Yea, but ye--think ye this king--
So many those that hate him, and so strong,
So few his knights, however brave they be--
Hath body enow to hold his foemen down?'

`O King,' she cried, `and I will tell thee: few,
Few, but all brave, all of one mind with him;
For I was near him when the savage yells
Of Uther's peerage died, and Arthur sat
Crowned on the das, and his warriors cried,
"Be thou the king, and we will work thy will
Who love thee." Then the King in low deep tones,
And simple words of great authority,
Bound them by so strait vows to his own self,
That when they rose, knighted from kneeling, some
Were pale as at the passing of a ghost,
Some flushed, and others dazed, as one who wakes
Half-blinded at the coming of a light.

`But when he spake and cheered his Table Round
With large, divine, and comfortable words,
Beyond my tongue to tell thee--I beheld
From eye to eye through all their Order flash
A momentary likeness of the King:
And ere it left their faces, through the cross
And those around it and the Crucified,
Down from the casement over Arthur, smote
Flame-colour, vert and azure, in three rays,
One falling upon each of three fair queens,
Who stood in silence near his throne, the friends
Of Arthur, gazing on him, tall, with bright
Sweet faces, who will help him at his need.

`And there I saw mage Merlin, whose vast wit

And hundred winters are but as the hands
Of loyal vassals toiling for their liege.

`And near him stood the Lady of the Lake,
Who knows a subtler magic than his own--
Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful.
She gave the King his huge cross-hilted sword,
Whereby to drive the heathen out: a mist
Of incense curled about her, and her face
Wellnigh was hidden in the minster gloom;
But there was heard among the holy hymns
A voice as of the waters, for she dwells
Down in a deep; calm, whatsoever storms
May shake the world, and when the surface rolls,
Hath power to walk the waters like our Lord.

`There likewise I beheld Excalibur
Before him at his crowning borne, the sword
That rose from out the bosom of the lake,
And Arthur rowed across and took it--rich
With jewels, elfin Urim, on the hilt,
Bewildering heart and eye--the blade so bright
That men are blinded by it--on one side,
Graven in the oldest tongue of all this world,
"Take me," but turn the blade and ye shall see,
And written in the speech ye speak yourself,
"Cast me away!" And sad was Arthur's face
Taking it, but old Merlin counselled him,
"Take thou and strike! the time to cast away
Is yet far-off." So this great brand the king
Took, and by this will beat his foemen down.'

Thereat Leodogran rejoiced, but thought
To sift his doubtings to the last, and asked,
Fixing full eyes of question on her face,
`The swallow and the swift are near akin,
But thou art closer to this noble prince,
Being his own dear sister;' and she said,
`Daughter of Gorlos and Ygerne am I;
`And therefore Arthur's sister?' asked the King.
She answered, `These be secret things,' and signed
To those two sons to pass, and let them be.
And Gawain went, and breaking into song
Sprang out, and followed by his flying hair
Ran like a colt, and leapt at all he saw:
But Modred laid his ear beside the doors,

And there half-heard; the same that afterward
Struck for the throne, and striking found his doom.

And then the Queen made answer, `What know I?
For dark my mother was in eyes and hair,
And dark in hair and eyes am I; and dark
Was Gorlos, yea and dark was Uther too,
Wellnigh to blackness; but this King is fair
Beyond the race of Britons and of men.
Moreover, always in my mind I hear
A cry from out the dawning of my life,
A mother weeping, and I hear her say,
"O that ye had some brother, pretty one,
To guard thee on the rough ways of the world."

`Ay,' said the King, `and hear ye such a cry?
But when did Arthur chance upon thee first?'

`O King!' she cried, `and I will tell thee true:
He found me first when yet a little maid:
Beaten I had been for a little fault
Whereof I was not guilty; and out I ran
And flung myself down on a bank of heath,
And hated this fair world and all therein,
And wept, and wished that I were dead; and he--
I know not whether of himself he came,
Or brought by Merlin, who, they say, can walk
Unseen at pleasure--he was at my side,
And spake sweet words, and comforted my heart,
And dried my tears, being a child with me.
And many a time he came, and evermore
As I grew greater grew with me; and sad
At times he seemed, and sad with him was I,
Stern too at times, and then I loved him not,
But sweet again, and then I loved him well.
And now of late I see him less and less,
But those first days had golden hours for me,
For then I surely thought he would be king.

`But let me tell thee now another tale:
For Bleys, our Merlin's master, as they say,
Died but of late, and sent his cry to me,
To hear him speak before he left his life.
Shrunk like a fairy changeling lay the mage;
And when I entered told me that himself
And Merlin ever served about the King,

Uther, before he died; and on the night
When Uther in Tintagil past away
Moaning and wailing for an heir, the two
Left the still King, and passing forth to breathe,
Then from the castle gateway by the chasm
Descending through the dismal night--a night
In which the bounds of heaven and earth were lost--
Beheld, so high upon the dreary deeps
It seemed in heaven, a ship, the shape thereof
A dragon winged, and all from stern to stern
Bright with a shining people on the decks,
And gone as soon as seen. And then the two
Dropt to the cove, and watched the great sea fall,
Wave after wave, each mightier than the last,
Till last, a ninth one, gathering half the deep
And full of voices, slowly rose and plunged
Roaring, and all the wave was in a flame:
And down the wave and in the flame was borne
A naked babe, and rode to Merlin's feet,
Who stooped and caught the babe, and cried "The King!
Here is an heir for Uther!" And the fringe
Of that great breaker, sweeping up the strand,
Lashed at the wizard as he spake the word,
And all at once all round him rose in fire,
So that the child and he were clothed in fire.
And presently thereafter followed calm,
Free sky and stars: "And this the same child," he said,
"Is he who reigns; nor could I part in peace
Till this were told." And saying this the seer
Went through the strait and dreadful pass of death,
Not ever to be questioned any more
Save on the further side; but when I met
Merlin, and asked him if these things were truth--
The shining dragon and the naked child
Descending in the glory of the seas--
He laughed as is his wont, and answered me
In riddling triplets of old time, and said:

"Rain, rain, and sun! a rainbow in the sky!
A young man will be wiser by and by;
An old man's wit may wander ere he die.
Rain, rain, and sun! a rainbow on the lea!
And truth is this to me, and that to thee;
And truth or clothed or naked let it be.
Rain, sun, and rain! and the free blossom blows:
Sun, rain, and sun! and where is he who knows?

From the great deep to the great deep he goes."

`So Merlin riddling angered me; but thou
Fear not to give this King thy only child,
Guinevere: so great bards of him will sing
Hereafter; and dark sayings from of old
Ranging and ringing through the minds of men,
And echoed by old folk beside their fires
For comfort after their wage-work is done,
Speak of the King; and Merlin in our time
Hath spoken also, not in jest, and sworn
Though men may wound him that he will not die,
But pass, again to come; and then or now
Utterly smite the heathen underfoot,
Till these and all men hail him for their king.'

She spake and King Leodogran rejoiced,
But musing, `Shall I answer yea or nay?'
Doubted, and drowsed, nodded and slept, and saw,
Dreaming, a slope of land that ever grew,
Field after field, up to a height, the peak
Haze-hidden, and thereon a phantom king,
Now looming, and now lost; and on the slope
The sword rose, the hind fell, the herd was driven,
Fire glimpsed; and all the land from roof and rick,
In drifts of smoke before a rolling wind,
Streamed to the peak, and mingled with the haze
And made it thicker; while the phantom king
Sent out at times a voice; and here or there
Stood one who pointed toward the voice, the rest
Slew on and burnt, crying, `No king of ours,
No son of Uther, and no king of ours;'
Till with a wink his dream was changed, the haze
Descended, and the solid earth became
As nothing, but the King stood out in heaven,
Crowned. And Leodogran awoke, and sent
Ulfius, and Brastias and Bedivere,
Back to the court of Arthur answering yea.

Then Arthur charged his warrior whom he loved
And honoured most, Sir Lancelot, to ride forth
And bring the Queen;--and watched him from the gates:
And Lancelot past away among the flowers,
(For then was latter April) and returned
Among the flowers, in May, with Guinevere.
To whom arrived, by Dubric the high saint,

Chief of the church in Britain, and before
The stateliest of her altar-shrines, the King
That morn was married, while in stainless white,
The fair beginners of a nobler time,
And glorying in their vows and him, his knights
Stood around him, and rejoicing in his joy.
Far shone the fields of May through open door,
The sacred altar blossomed white with May,
The Sun of May descended on their King,
They gazed on all earth's beauty in their Queen,
Rolled incense, and there past along the hymns
A voice as of the waters, while the two
Swore at the shrine of Christ a deathless love:
And Arthur said, `Behold, thy doom is mine.
Let chance what will, I love thee to the death!'
To whom the Queen replied with drooping eyes,
`King and my lord, I love thee to the death!'
And holy Dubric spread his hands and spake,
`Reign ye, and live and love, and make the world
Other, and may thy Queen be one with thee,
And all this Order of thy Table Round
Fulfil the boundless purpose of their King!'

So Dubric said; but when they left the shrine
Great Lords from Rome before the portal stood,
In scornful stillness gazing as they past;
Then while they paced a city all on fire
With sun and cloth of gold, the trumpets blew,
And Arthur's knighthood sang before the King:--

`Blow, trumpet, for the world is white with May;
Blow trumpet, the long night hath rolled away!
Blow through the living world--"Let the King reign."

`Shall Rome or Heathen rule in Arthur's realm?
Flash brand and lance, fall battleaxe upon helm,
Fall battleaxe, and flash brand! Let the King reign.

`Strike for the King and live! his knights have heard
That God hath told the King a secret word.
Fall battleaxe, and flash brand! Let the King reign.

`Blow trumpet! he will lift us from the dust.
Blow trumpet! live the strength and die the lust!
Clang battleaxe, and clash brand! Let the King reign.

`Strike for the King and die! and if thou diest,
The King is King, and ever wills the highest.
Clang battleaxe, and clash brand! Let the King reign.

`Blow, for our Sun is mighty in his May!
Blow, for our Sun is mightier day by day!
Clang battleaxe, and clash brand! Let the King reign.

`The King will follow Christ, and we the King
In whom high God hath breathed a secret thing.
Fall battleaxe, and flash brand! Let the King reign.'

So sang the knighthood, moving to their hall.
There at the banquet those great Lords from Rome,
The slowly-fading mistress of the world,
Strode in, and claimed their tribute as of yore.
But Arthur spake, `Behold, for these have sworn
To wage my wars, and worship me their King;
The old order changeth, yielding place to new;
And we that fight for our fair father Christ,
Seeing that ye be grown too weak and old
To drive the heathen from your Roman wall,
No tribute will we pay:' so those great lords
Drew back in wrath, and Arthur strove with Rome.

And Arthur and his knighthood for a space
Were all one will, and through that strength the King
Drew in the petty princedoms under him,
Fought, and in twelve great battles overcame
The heathen hordes, and made a realm and reigned.

Gareth and Lynette

The last tall son of Lot and Bellicent,
And tallest, Gareth, in a showerful spring
Stared at the spate. A slender-shafted Pine
Lost footing, fell, and so was whirled away.
'How he went down,' said Gareth, 'as a false knight
Or evil king before my lance if lance

Were mine to use--O senseless cataract,
Bearing all down in thy precipitancy--
And yet thou art but swollen with cold snows
And mine is living blood: thou dost His will,
The Maker's, and not knowest, and I that know,
Have strength and wit, in my good mother's hall
Linger with vacillating obedience,
Prisoned, and kept and coaxed and whistled to--
Since the good mother holds me still a child!
Good mother is bad mother unto me!
A worse were better; yet no worse would I.
Heaven yield her for it, but in me put force
To weary her ears with one continuous prayer,
Until she let me fly discaged to sweep
In ever-highering eagle-circles up
To the great Sun of Glory, and thence swoop
Down upon all things base, and dash them dead,
A knight of Arthur, working out his will,
To cleanse the world. Why, Gawain, when he came
With Modred hither in the summertime,
Asked me to tilt with him, the proven knight.
Modred for want of worthier was the judge.
Then I so shook him in the saddle, he said,
"Thou hast half prevailed against me," said so--he--
Though Modred biting his thin lips was mute,
For he is alway sullen: what care I?

And Gareth went, and hovering round her chair
Asked, 'Mother, though ye count me still the child,
Sweet mother, do ye love the child?' She laughed,
'Thou art but a wild-goose to question it.'
'Then, mother, an ye love the child,' he said,
'Being a goose and rather tame than wild,
Hear the child's story.' 'Yea, my well-beloved,
An 'twere but of the goose and golden eggs.'

And Gareth answered her with kindling eyes,
'Nay, nay, good mother, but this egg of mine
Was finer gold than any goose can lay;
For this an Eagle, a royal Eagle, laid
Almost beyond eye-reach, on such a palm
As glitters gilded in thy Book of Hours.
And there was ever haunting round the palm
A lusty youth, but poor, who often saw
The splendour sparkling from aloft, and thought
"An I could climb and lay my hand upon it,

Then were I wealthier than a leash of kings."
But ever when he reached a hand to climb,
One, that had loved him from his childhood, caught
And stayed him, "Climb not lest thou break thy neck,
I charge thee by my love," and so the boy,
Sweet mother, neither clomb, nor brake his neck,
But brake his very heart in pining for it,
And past away.'

To whom the mother said,
'True love, sweet son, had risked himself and climbed,
And handed down the golden treasure to him.'

And Gareth answered her with kindling eyes,
'Gold?' said I gold?--ay then, why he, or she,
Or whosoe'er it was, or half the world
Had ventured--HAD the thing I spake of been
Mere gold--but this was all of that true steel,
Whereof they forged the brand Excalibur,
And lightnings played about it in the storm,
And all the little fowl were flurried at it,
And there were cries and clashings in the nest,
That sent him from his senses: let me go.'

Then Bellicent bemoaned herself and said,
'Hast thou no pity upon my loneliness?
Lo, where thy father Lot beside the hearth
Lies like a log, and all but smouldered out!
For ever since when traitor to the King
He fought against him in the Barons' war,
And Arthur gave him back his territory,
His age hath slowly droopt, and now lies there
A yet-warm corpse, and yet unburiab,le,
No more; nor sees, nor hears, nor speaks, nor knows.
And both thy brethren are in Arthur's hall,
Albeit neither loved with that full love
I feel for thee, nor worthy such a love:
Stay therefore thou; red berries charm the bird,
And thee, mine innocent, the jousts, the wars,
Who never knewest finger-ache, nor pang
Of wrenched or broken limb--an often chance
In those brain-stunning shocks, and tourney-falls,
Frights to my heart; but stay: follow the deer
By these tall firs and our fast-falling burns;
So make thy manhood mightier day by day;
Sweet is the chase: and I will seek thee out

Some comfortable bride and fair, to grace
Thy climbing life, and cherish my prone year,
Till falling into Lot's forgetfulness
I know not thee, myself, nor anything.
Stay, my best son! ye are yet more boy than man.'

Then Gareth, 'An ye hold me yet for child,
Hear yet once more the story of the child.
For, mother, there was once a King, like ours.
The prince his heir, when tall and marriageable,
Asked for a bride; and thereupon the King
Set two before him. One was fair, strong, armed--
But to be won by force--and many men
Desired her; one good lack, no man desired.
And these were the conditions of the King:
That save he won the first by force, he needs
Must wed that other, whom no man desired,
A red-faced bride who knew herself so vile,
That evermore she longed to hide herself,
Nor fronted man or woman, eye to eye--
Yea--some she cleaved to, but they died of her.
And one--they called her Fame; and one,--O Mother,
How can ye keep me tethered to you--Shame.
Man am I grown, a man's work must I do.
Follow the deer? follow the Christ, the King,
Live pure, speak true, right wrong, follow the King--
Else, wherefore born?'

To whom the mother said
'Sweet son, for there be many who deem him not,
Or will not deem him, wholly proven King--
Albeit in mine own heart I knew him King,
When I was frequent with him in my youth,
And heard him Kingly speak, and doubted him
No more than he, himself; but felt him mine,
Of closest kin to me: yet--wilt thou leave
Thine easeful bidding here, and risk thine all,
Life, limbs, for one that is not proven King?
Stay, till the cloud that settles round his birth
Hath lifted but a little. Stay, sweet son.'

And Gareth answered quickly, 'Not an hour,
So that ye yield me--I will walk through fire,
Mother, to gain it--your full leave to go.
Not proven, who swept the dust of ruined Rome
From off the threshold of the realm, and crushed

The Idolaters, and made the people free?
Who should be King save him who makes us free?'

So when the Queen, who long had sought in vain
To break him from the intent to which he grew,
Found her son's will unwaveringly one,
She answered craftily, 'Will ye walk through fire?
Who walks through fire will hardly heed the smoke.
Ay, go then, an ye must: only one proof,
Before thou ask the King to make thee knight,
Of thine obedience and thy love to me,
Thy mother,--I demand.

And Gareth cried,
'A hard one, or a hundred, so I go.
Nay--quick! the proof to prove me to the quick!'

But slowly spake the mother looking at him,
'Prince, thou shalt go disguised to Arthur's hall,
And hire thyself to serve for meats and drinks
Among the scullions and the kitchen-knaves,
And those that hand the dish across the bar.
Nor shalt thou tell thy name to anyone.
And thou shalt serve a twelvemonth and a day.'

For so the Queen believed that when her son
Beheld his only way to glory lead
Low down through villain kitchen-vassalage,
Her own true Gareth was too princely-proud
To pass thereby; so should he rest with her,
Closed in her castle from the sound of arms.

Silent awhile was Gareth, then replied,
'The thrall in person may be free in soul,
And I shall see the jousts. Thy son am I,
And since thou art my mother, must obey.
I therefore yield me freely to thy will;
For hence will I, disguised, and hire myself
To serve with scullions and with kitchen-knaves;
Nor tell my name to any--no, not the King.'

Gareth awhile lingered. The mother's eye
Full of the wistful fear that he would go,
And turning toward him wheresoe'er he turned,
Perplexed his outward purpose, till an hour,
When wakened by the wind which with full voice

Swept bellowing through the darkness on to dawn,
He rose, and out of slumber calling two
That still had tended on him from his birth,
Before the wakeful mother heard him, went.

The three were clad like tillers of the soil.
Southward they set their faces. The birds made
Melody on branch, and melody in mid air.
The damp hill-slopes were quickened into green,
And the live green had kindled into flowers,
For it was past the time of Easterday.

So, when their feet were planted on the plain
That broadened toward the base of Camelot,
Far off they saw the silver-misty morn
Rolling her smoke about the Royal mount,
That rose between the forest and the field.
At times the summit of the high city flashed;
At times the spires and turrets half-way down
Pricked through the mist; at times the great gate shone
Only, that opened on the field below:
Anon, the whole fair city had disappeared.

Then those who went with Gareth were amazed,
One crying, 'Let us go no further, lord.
Here is a city of Enchanters, built
By fairy Kings.' The second echoed him,
'Lord, we have heard from our wise man at home
To Northward, that this King is not the King,
But only changeling out of Fairyland,
Who drave the heathen hence by sorcery
And Merlin's glamour.' Then the first again,
'Lord, there is no such city anywhere,
But all a vision.'

Gareth answered them
With laughter, swearing he had glamour enow
In his own blood, his pryncedom, youth and hopes,
To plunge old Merlin in the Arabian sea;
So pushed them all unwilling toward the gate.
And there was no gate like it under heaven.
For barefoot on the keystone, which was lined
And rippled like an ever-fleeting wave,
The Lady of the Lake stood: all her dress
Wept from her sides as water flowing away;
But like the cross her great and goodly arms

Stretched under the cornice and upheld:
And drops of water fell from either hand;
And down from one a sword was hung, from one
A censer, either worn with wind and storm;
And o'er her breast floated the sacred fish;
And in the space to left of her, and right,
Were Arthur's wars in weird devices done,
New things and old co-twisted, as if Time
Were nothing, so inveterately, that men
Were giddy gazing there; and over all
High on the top were those three Queens, the friends
Of Arthur, who should help him at his need.

Then those with Gareth for so long a space
Stared at the figures, that at last it seemed
The dragon-boughts and elvish emblemings
Began to move, seethe, twine and curl: they called
To Gareth, 'Lord, the gateway is alive.'

And Gareth likewise on them fixt his eyes
So long, that even to him they seemed to move.
Out of the city a blast of music pealed.
Back from the gate started the three, to whom
From out thereunder came an ancient man,
Long-bearded, saying, 'Who be ye, my sons?'

Then Gareth, 'We be tillers of the soil,
Who leaving share in furrow come to see
The glories of our King: but these, my men,
(Your city moved so weirdly in the mist)
Doubt if the King be King at all, or come
From Fairyland; and whether this be built
By magic, and by fairy Kings and Queens;
Or whether there be any city at all,
Or all a vision: and this music now
Hath scared them both, but tell thou these the truth.'

Then that old Seer made answer playing on him
And saying, 'Son, I have seen the good ship sail
Keel upward, and mast downward, in the heavens,
And solid turrets topsy-turvy in air:
And here is truth; but an it please thee not,
Take thou the truth as thou hast told it me.
For truly as thou sayest, a Fairy King
And Fairy Queens have built the city, son;
They came from out a sacred mountain-cleft

Toward the sunrise, each with harp in hand,
And built it to the music of their harps.
And, as thou sayest, it is enchanted, son,
For there is nothing in it as it seems
Saving the King; though some there be that hold
The King a shadow, and the city real:
Yet take thou heed of him, for, so thou pass
Beneath this archway, then wilt thou become
A thrall to his enchantments, for the King
Will bind thee by such vows, as is a shame
A man should not be bound by, yet the which
No man can keep; but, so thou dread to swear,
Pass not beneath this gateway, but abide
Without, among the cattle of the field.
For an ye heard a music, like enow
They are building still, seeing the city is built
To music, therefore never built at all,
And therefore built for ever.'

Gareth spake

Angered, 'Old master, reverence thine own beard
That looks as white as utter truth, and seems
Wellnigh as long as thou art statured tall!
Why mockest thou the stranger that hath been
To thee fair-spoken?'

But the Seer replied,

'Know ye not then the Riddling of the Bards?
"Confusion, and illusion, and relation,
Elusion, and occasion, and evasion"?
I mock thee not but as thou mockest me,
And all that see thee, for thou art not who
Thou seemest, but I know thee who thou art.
And now thou goest up to mock the King,
Who cannot brook the shadow of any lie.'

Unmockingly the mocker ending here
Turned to the right, and past along the plain;
Whom Gareth looking after said, 'My men,
Our one white lie sits like a little ghost
Here on the threshold of our enterprise.
Let love be blamed for it, not she, nor I:
Well, we will make amends.'

With all good cheer

He spake and laughed, then entered with his twain

Camelot, a city of shadowy palaces
And stately, rich in emblem and the work
Of ancient kings who did their days in stone;
Which Merlin's hand, the Mage at Arthur's court,
Knowing all arts, had touched, and everywhere
At Arthur's ordinance, tipt with lessening peak
And pinnacle, and had made it spire to heaven.
And ever and anon a knight would pass
Outward, or inward to the hall: his arms
Clashed; and the sound was good to Gareth's ear.
And out of bower and casement shyly glanced
Eyes of pure women, wholesome stars of love;
And all about a healthful people stept
As in the presence of a gracious king.

Then into hall Gareth ascending heard
A voice, the voice of Arthur, and beheld
Far over heads in that long-vaulted hall
The splendour of the presence of the King
Throned, and delivering doom--and looked no more--
But felt his young heart hammering in his ears,
And thought, 'For this half-shadow of a lie
The truthful King will doom me when I speak.'
Yet pressing on, though all in fear to find
Sir Gawain or Sir Modred, saw nor one
Nor other, but in all the listening eyes
Of those tall knights, that ranged about the throne,
Clear honour shining like the dewy star
Of dawn, and faith in their great King, with pure
Affection, and the light of victory,
And glory gained, and evermore to gain.
Then came a widow crying to the King,
'A boon, Sir King! Thy father, Uther, reft
From my dead lord a field with violence:
For howsoe'er at first he proffered gold,
Yet, for the field was pleasant in our eyes,
We yielded not; and then he reft us of it
Perforce, and left us neither gold nor field.'

Said Arthur, 'Whether would ye? gold or field?'
To whom the woman weeping, 'Nay, my lord,
The field was pleasant in my husband's eye.'

And Arthur, 'Have thy pleasant field again,
And thrice the gold for Uther's use thereof,
According to the years. No boon is here,

But justice, so thy say be proven true.
Accursed, who from the wrongs his father did
Would shape himself a right!

And while she past,
Came yet another widow crying to him,
'A boon, Sir King! Thine enemy, King, am I.
With thine own hand thou slewest my dear lord,
A knight of Uther in the Barons' war,
When Lot and many another rose and fought
Against thee, saying thou wert basely born.
I held with these, and loathe to ask thee aught.
Yet lo! my husband's brother had my son
Thralled in his castle, and hath starved him dead;
And standeth seized of that inheritance
Which thou that slewest the sire hast left the son.
So though I scarce can ask it thee for hate,
Grant me some knight to do the battle for me,
Kill the foul thief, and wreak me for my son.'

Then strode a good knight forward, crying to him,
'A boon, Sir King! I am her kinsman, I.
Give me to right her wrong, and slay the man.'

Then came Sir Kay, the seneschal, and cried,
'A boon, Sir King! even that thou grant her none,
This railer, that hath mocked thee in full hall--
None; or the wholesome boon of gyve and gag.'

But Arthur, 'We sit King, to help the wronged
Through all our realm. The woman loves her lord.
Peace to thee, woman, with thy loves and hates!
The kings of old had doomed thee to the flames,
Aurelius Emrys would have scourged thee dead,
And Uther slit thy tongue: but get thee hence--
Lest that rough humour of the kings of old
Return upon me! Thou that art her kin,
Go likewise; lay him low and slay him not,
But bring him here, that I may judge the right,
According to the justice of the King:
Then, be he guilty, by that deathless King
Who lived and died for men, the man shall die.'

Then came in hall the messenger of Mark,
A name of evil savour in the land,
The Cornish king. In either hand he bore

What dazzled all, and shone far-off as shines
A field of charlock in the sudden sun
Between two showers, a cloth of palest gold,
Which down he laid before the throne, and knelt,
Delivering, that his lord, the vassal king,
Was even upon his way to Camelot;
For having heard that Arthur of his grace
Had made his goodly cousin, Tristram, knight,
And, for himself was of the greater state,
Being a king, he trusted his liege-lord
Would yield him this large honour all the more;
So prayed him well to accept this cloth of gold,
In token of true heart and felty.

Then Arthur cried to rend the cloth, to rend
In pieces, and so cast it on the hearth.
An oak-tree smouldered there. 'The goodly knight!
What! shall the shield of Mark stand among these?'
For, midway down the side of that long hall
A stately pile,--whereof along the front,
Some blazoned, some but carven, and some blank,
There ran a treble range of stony shields,--
Rose, and high-arching overbrowed the hearth.
And under every shield a knight was named:
For this was Arthur's custom in his hall;
When some good knight had done one noble deed,
His arms were carven only; but if twain
His arms were blazoned also; but if none,
The shield was blank and bare without a sign
Saving the name beneath; and Gareth saw
The shield of Gawain blazoned rich and bright,
And Modred's blank as death; and Arthur cried
To rend the cloth and cast it on the hearth.

'More like are we to reave him of his crown
Than make him knight because men call him king.
The kings we found, ye know we stayed their hands
From war among themselves, but left them kings;
Of whom were any bounteous, merciful,
Truth-speaking, brave, good livers, them we enrolled
Among us, and they sit within our hall.
But as Mark hath tarnished the great name of king,
As Mark would sully the low state of churl:
And, seeing he hath sent us cloth of gold,
Return, and meet, and hold him from our eyes,
Lest we should lap him up in cloth of lead,

Silenced for ever--craven--a man of plots,
Craft, poisonous counsels, wayside ambushings--
No fault of thine: let Kay the seneschal
Look to thy wants, and send thee satisfied--
Accursed, who strikes nor lets the hand be seen!"

And many another suppliant crying came
With noise of ravage wrought by beast and man,
And evermore a knight would ride away.

Last, Gareth leaning both hands heavily
Down on the shoulders of the twain, his men,
Approached between them toward the King, and asked,
'A boon, Sir King (his voice was all ashamed),
For see ye not how weak and hungerworn
I seem--leaning on these? grant me to serve
For meat and drink among thy kitchen-knaves
A twelvemonth and a day, nor seek my name.
Hereafter I will fight.'

To him the King,
'A goodly youth and worth a goodlier boon!
But so thou wilt no goodlier, then must Kay,
The master of the meats and drinks, be thine.'

He rose and past; then Kay, a man of mien
Wan-sallow as the plant that feels itself
Root-bitten by white lichen,

'Lo ye now!
This fellow hath broken from some Abbey, where,
God wot, he had not beef and brewis enow,
However that might chance! but an he work,
Like any pigeon will I cram his crop,
And sleeker shall he shine than any hog.'

Then Lancelot standing near, 'Sir Seneschal,
Sleuth-hound thou knowest, and gray, and all the hounds;
A horse thou knowest, a man thou dost not know:
Broad brows and fair, a fluent hair and fine,
High nose, a nostril large and fine, and hands
Large, fair and fine!--Some young lad's mystery--
But, or from sheepcot or king's hall, the boy
Is noble-natured. Treat him with all grace,
Lest he should come to shame thy judging of him.'

Then Kay, 'What murmurest thou of mystery?
Think ye this fellow will poison the King's dish?
Nay, for he spake too fool-like: mystery!
Tut, an the lad were noble, he had asked
For horse and armour: fair and fine, forsooth!
Sir Fine-face, Sir Fair-hands? but see thou to it
That thine own fineness, Lancelot, some fine day
Undo thee not--and leave my man to me.'

So Gareth all for glory underwent
The sooty yoke of kitchen-vassalage;
Ate with young lads his portion by the door,
And couched at night with grimy kitchen-knives.
And Lancelot ever spake him pleasantly,
But Kay the seneschal, who loved him not,
Would hustle and harry him, and labour him
Beyond his comrade of the hearth, and set
To turn the broach, draw water, or hew wood,
Or grosser tasks; and Gareth bowed himself
With all obedience to the King, and wrought
All kind of service with a noble ease
That graced the lowliest act in doing it.
And when the thralls had talk among themselves,
And one would praise the love that linkt the King
And Lancelot--how the King had saved his life
In battle twice, and Lancelot once the King's--
For Lancelot was the first in Tournament,
But Arthur mightiest on the battle-field--
Gareth was glad. Or if some other told,
How once the wandering forester at dawn,
Far over the blue tarns and hazy seas,
On Caer-Eryri's highest found the King,
A naked babe, of whom the Prophet spake,
'He passes to the Isle Avilion,
He passes and is healed and cannot die'--
Gareth was glad. But if their talk were foul,
Then would he whistle rapid as any lark,
Or carol some old roundelay, and so loud
That first they mocked, but, after, revered him.
Or Gareth telling some prodigious tale
Of knights, who sliced a red life-bubbling way
Through twenty folds of twisted dragon, held
All in a gap-mouthed circle his good mates
Lying or sitting round him, idle hands,
Charmed; till Sir Kay, the seneschal, would come
Blustering upon them, like a sudden wind

Among dead leaves, and drive them all apart.
Or when the thralls had sport among themselves,
So there were any trial of mastery,
He, by two yards in casting bar or stone
Was counted best; and if there chanced a joust,
So that Sir Kay nodded him leave to go,
Would hurry thither, and when he saw the knights
Clash like the coming and retiring wave,
And the spear spring, and good horse reel, the boy
Was half beyond himself for ecstasy.

So for a month he wrought among the thralls;
But in the weeks that followed, the good Queen,
Repentant of the word she made him swear,
And saddening in her childless castle, sent,
Between the in-crescent and de-crescent moon,
Arms for her son, and loosed him from his vow.

This, Gareth hearing from a squire of Lot
With whom he used to play at tourney once,
When both were children, and in lonely haunts
Would scratch a ragged oval on the sand,
And each at either dash from either end--
Shame never made girl redder than Gareth joy.
He laughed; he sprang. 'Out of the smoke, at once
I leap from Satan's foot to Peter's knee--
These news be mine, none other's--nay, the King's--
Descend into the city:' whereon he sought
The King alone, and found, and told him all.

'I have staggered thy strong Gawain in a tilt
For pastime; yea, he said it: joust can I.
Make me thy knight--in secret! let my name
Be hidden, and give me the first quest, I spring
Like flame from ashes.'

Here the King's calm eye
Fell on, and checked, and made him flush, and bow
Lowly, to kiss his hand, who answered him,
'Son, the good mother let me know thee here,
And sent her wish that I would yield thee thine.
Make thee my knight? my knights are sworn to vows
Of utter hardihood, utter gentleness,
And, loving, utter faithfulness in love,
And uttermost obedience to the King.'

Then Gareth, lightly springing from his knees,
'My King, for hardihood I can promise thee.
For uttermost obedience make demand
Of whom ye gave me to, the Seneschal,
No mellow master of the meats and drinks!
And as for love, God wot, I love not yet,
But love I shall, God willing.'

And the King
'Make thee my knight in secret? yea, but he,
Our noblest brother, and our truest man,
And one with me in all, he needs must know.'

'Let Lancelot know, my King, let Lancelot know,
Thy noblest and thy truest!'

And the King--
'But wherefore would ye men should wonder at you?
Nay, rather for the sake of me, their King,
And the deed's sake my knighthood do the deed,
Than to be noised of.'

Merrily Gareth asked,
'Have I not earned my cake in baking of it?
Let be my name until I make my name!
My deeds will speak: it is but for a day.'
So with a kindly hand on Gareth's arm
Smiled the great King, and half-unwillingly
Loving his lusty youthhood yielded to him.
Then, after summoning Lancelot privily,
'I have given him the first quest: he is not proven.
Look therefore when he calls for this in hall,
Thou get to horse and follow him far away.
Cover the lions on thy shield, and see
Far as thou mayest, he be nor ta'en nor slain.'

Then that same day there past into the hall
A damsel of high lineage, and a brow
May-blossom, and a cheek of apple-blossom,
Hawk-eyes; and lightly was her slender nose
Tip-tilted like the petal of a flower;
She into hall past with her page and cried,

'O King, for thou hast driven the foe without,
See to the foe within! bridge, ford, beset
By bandits, everyone that owns a tower

The Lord for half a league. Why sit ye there?
Rest would I not, Sir King, an I were king,
Till even the lonest hold were all as free
From cursd bloodshed, as thine altar-cloth
From that best blood it is a sin to spill.'

'Comfort thyself,' said Arthur. 'I nor mine
Rest: so my knighthood keep the vows they swore,
The wastest moorland of our realm shall be
Safe, damsel, as the centre of this hall.
What is thy name? thy need?'

'My name?' she said--
'Lynette my name; noble; my need, a knight
To combat for my sister, Lyonors,
A lady of high lineage, of great lands,
And comely, yea, and comelier than myself.
She lives in Castle Perilous: a river
Runs in three loops about her living-place;
And o'er it are three passings, and three knights
Defend the passings, brethren, and a fourth
And of that four the mightiest, holds her stayed
In her own castle, and so besieges her
To break her will, and make her wed with him:
And but delays his purport till thou send
To do the battle with him, thy chief man
Sir Lancelot whom he trusts to overthrow,
Then wed, with glory: but she will not wed
Save whom she loveth, or a holy life.
Now therefore have I come for Lancelot.'

Then Arthur mindful of Sir Gareth asked,
'Damsel, ye know this Order lives to crush
All wrongers of the Realm. But say, these four,
Who be they? What the fashion of the men?'

'They be of foolish fashion, O Sir King,
The fashion of that old knight-errantry
Who ride abroad, and do but what they will;
Courteous or bestial from the moment, such
As have nor law nor king; and three of these
Proud in their fantasy call themselves the Day,
Morning-Star, and Noon-Sun, and Evening-Star,
Being strong fools; and never a whit more wise
The fourth, who alway rideth armed in black,
A huge man-beast of boundless savagery.

He names himself the Night and oftener Death,
And wears a helmet mounted with a skull,
And bears a skeleton figured on his arms,
To show that who may slay or scape the three,
Slain by himself, shall enter endless night.
And all these four be fools, but mighty men,
And therefore am I come for Lancelot.'

Hereat Sir Gareth called from where he rose,
A head with kindling eyes above the throng,
'A boon, Sir King--this quest!' then--for he marked
Kay near him groaning like a wounded bull--
'Yea, King, thou knowest thy kitchen-knave am I,
And mighty through thy meats and drinks am I,
And I can topple over a hundred such.
Thy promise, King,' and Arthur glancing at him,
Brought down a momentary brow. 'Rough, sudden,
And pardonable, worthy to be knight--
Go therefore,' and all hearers were amazed.

But on the damsel's forehead shame, pride, wrath
Slew the May-white: she lifted either arm,
'Fie on thee, King! I asked for thy chief knight,
And thou hast given me but a kitchen-knave.'
Then ere a man in hall could stay her, turned,
Fled down the lane of access to the King,
Took horse, descended the slope street, and past
The weird white gate, and paused without, beside
The field of tourney, murmuring 'kitchen-knave.'

Now two great entries opened from the hall,
At one end one, that gave upon a range
Of level pavement where the King would pace
At sunrise, gazing over plain and wood;
And down from this a lordly stairway sloped
Till lost in blowing trees and tops of towers;
And out by this main doorway past the King.
But one was counter to the hearth, and rose
High that the highest-crested helm could ride
Therethrough nor graze: and by this entry fled
The damsel in her wrath, and on to this
Sir Gareth strode, and saw without the door
King Arthur's gift, the worth of half a town,
A warhorse of the best, and near it stood
The two that out of north had followed him:
This bare a maiden shield, a casque; that held

The horse, the spear; whereat Sir Gareth loosed
A cloak that dropt from collar-bone to heel,
A cloth of roughest web, and cast it down,
And from it like a fuel-smothered fire,
That lookt half-dead, brake bright, and flashed as those
Dull-coated things, that making slide apart
Their dusk wing-cases, all beneath there burns
A jewelled harness, ere they pass and fly.
So Gareth ere he parted flashed in arms.
Then as he donned the helm, and took the shield
And mounted horse and graspt a spear, of grain
Storm-strengthened on a windy site, and tipt
With trenchant steel, around him slowly prest
The people, while from out of kitchen came
The thralls in throng, and seeing who had worked
Lustier than any, and whom they could but love,
Mounted in arms, threw up their caps and cried,
'God bless the King, and all his fellowship!'
And on through lanes of shouting Gareth rode
Down the slope street, and past without the gate.

So Gareth past with joy; but as the cur
Pluckt from the cur he fights with, ere his cause
Be cooled by fighting, follows, being named,
His owner, but remembers all, and growls
Remembering, so Sir Kay beside the door
Muttered in scorn of Gareth whom he used
To harry and hustle.

'Bound upon a quest
With horse and arms--the King hath past his time--
My scullion knave! Thralls to your work again,
For an your fire be low ye kindle mine!
Will there be dawn in West and eve in East?
Begone!--my knave!--belike and like enow
Some old head-blow not heeded in his youth
So shook his wits they wander in his prime--
Crazed! How the villain lifted up his voice,
Nor shamed to bawl himself a kitchen-knave.
Tut: he was tame and meek enow with me,
Till peacocked up with Lancelot's noticing.
Well--I will after my loud knave, and learn
Whether he know me for his master yet.
Out of the smoke he came, and so my lance
Hold, by God's grace, he shall into the mire--
Thence, if the King awaken from his craze,

Into the smoke again.'

But Lancelot said,
'Kay, wherefore wilt thou go against the King,
For that did never he whereon ye rail,
But ever meekly served the King in thee?
Abide: take counsel; for this lad is great
And lusty, and knowing both of lance and sword.'
'Tut, tell not me,' said Kay, 'ye are overfine
To mar stout knaves with foolish courtesies.'
Then mounted, on through silent faces rode
Down the slope city, and out beyond the gate.

But by the field of tourney lingering yet
Muttered the damsel, 'Wherefore did the King
Scorn me? for, were Sir Lancelot lackt, at least
He might have yielded to me one of those
Who tilt for lady's love and glory here,
Rather than--O sweet heaven! O fie upon him--
His kitchen-knave.'

To whom Sir Gareth drew
(And there were none but few goodlier than he)
Shining in arms, 'Damsel, the quest is mine.
Lead, and I follow.' She thereat, as one
That smells a foul-fleshed agaric in the holt,
And deems it carrion of some woodland thing,
Or shrew, or weasel, nipt her slender nose
With petulant thumb and finger, shrilling, 'Hence!
Avoid, thou smelllest all of kitchen-grease.
And look who comes behind,' for there was Kay.
'Knowest thou not me? thy master? I am Kay.
We lack thee by the hearth.'

And Gareth to him,
'Master no more! too well I know thee, ay--
The most ungentle knight in Arthur's hall.'
'Have at thee then,' said Kay: they shocked, and Kay
Fell shoulder-slipt, and Gareth cried again,
'Lead, and I follow,' and fast away she fled.

But after sod and shingle ceased to fly
Behind her, and the heart of her good horse
Was nigh to burst with violence of the beat,
Perforce she stayed, and overtaken spoke.

'What doest thou, scullion, in my fellowship?
Deem'st thou that I accept thee aught the more
Or love thee better, that by some device
Full cowardly, or by mere unhappiness,
Thou hast overthrown and slain thy master--thou!--
Dish-washer and broach-turner, loon!--to me
Thou smellest all of kitchen as before.'

'Damsel,' Sir Gareth answered gently, 'say
Whate'er ye will, but whatsoe'er ye say,
I leave not till I finish this fair quest,
Or die therefore.'

'Ay, wilt thou finish it?
Sweet lord, how like a noble knight he talks!
The listening rogue hath caught the manner of it.
But, knave, anon thou shalt be met with, knave,
And then by such a one that thou for all
The kitchen brewis that was ever supt
Shalt not once dare to look him in the face.'

'I shall assay,' said Gareth with a smile
That maddened her, and away she flashed again
Down the long avenues of a boundless wood,
And Gareth following was again beknaved.

'Sir Kitchen-knave, I have missed the only way
Where Arthur's men are set along the wood;
The wood is nigh as full of thieves as leaves:
If both be slain, I am rid of thee; but yet,
Sir Scullion, canst thou use that spit of thine?
Fight, an thou canst: I have missed the only way.'

So till the dusk that followed evensong
Rode on the two, reviler and reviled;
Then after one long slope was mounted, saw,
Bowl-shaped, through tops of many thousand pines
A gloomy-gladed hollow slowly sink
To westward--in the deeps whereof a mere,
Round as the red eye of an Eagle-owl,
Under the half-dead sunset glared; and shouts
Ascended, and there brake a servingman
Flying from out of the black wood, and crying,
'They have bound my lord to cast him in the mere.'
Then Gareth, 'Bound am I to right the wronged,
But straitlier bound am I to bide with thee.'

And when the damsel spake contemptuously,
'Lead, and I follow,' Gareth cried again,
'Follow, I lead!' so down among the pines
He plunged; and there, blackshadowed nigh the mere,
And mid-thigh-deep in bulrushes and reed,
Saw six tall men haling a seventh along,
A stone about his neck to drown him in it.
Three with good blows he quieted, but three
Fled through the pines; and Gareth loosed the stone
From off his neck, then in the mere beside
Tumbled it; oilily bubbled up the mere.
Last, Gareth loosed his bonds and on free feet
Set him, a stalwart Baron, Arthur's friend.

'Well that ye came, or else these caitiff rogues
Had wreaked themselves on me; good cause is theirs
To hate me, for my wont hath ever been
To catch my thief, and then like vermin here
Drown him, and with a stone about his neck;
And under this wan water many of them
Lie rotting, but at night let go the stone,
And rise, and flickering in a grimly light
Dance on the mere. Good now, ye have saved a life
Worth somewhat as the cleanser of this wood.
And fain would I reward thee worshipfully.
What guerdon will ye?'

Gareth sharply spake,
'None! for the deed's sake have I done the deed,
In uttermost obedience to the King.
But wilt thou yield this damsel harbourage?'

Whereat the Baron saying, 'I well believe
You be of Arthur's Table,' a light laugh
Broke from Lynette, 'Ay, truly of a truth,
And in a sort, being Arthur's kitchen-knave!--
But deem not I accept thee aught the more,
Scullion, for running sharply with thy spit
Down on a rout of craven foresters.
A thresher with his flail had scattered them.
Nay--for thou smellest of the kitchen still.
But an this lord will yield us harbourage,
Well.'

So she spake. A league beyond the wood,
All in a full-fair manor and a rich,
His towers where that day a feast had been

Held in high hall, and many a viand left,
And many a costly cate, received the three.
And there they placed a peacock in his pride
Before the damsel, and the Baron set
Gareth beside her, but at once she rose.

'Meseems, that here is much discourtesy,
Setting this knave, Lord Baron, at my side.
Hear me--this morn I stood in Arthur's hall,
And prayed the King would grant me Lancelot
To fight the brotherhood of Day and Night--
The last a monster unsubduable
Of any save of him for whom I called--
Suddenly bawls this frontless kitchen-knave,
"The quest is mine; thy kitchen-knave am I,
And mighty through thy meats and drinks am I."
Then Arthur all at once gone mad replies,
"Go therefore," and so gives the quest to him--
Him--here--a villain fitter to stick swine
Than ride abroad redressing women's wrong,
Or sit beside a noble gentlewoman.'

Then half-ashamed and part-amazed, the lord
Now looked at one and now at other, left
The damsel by the peacock in his pride,
And, seating Gareth at another board,
Sat down beside him, ate and then began.

'Friend, whether thou be kitchen-knave, or not,
Or whether it be the maiden's fantasy,
And whether she be mad, or else the King,
Or both or neither, or thyself be mad,
I ask not: but thou strikest a strong stroke,
For strong thou art and goodly therewithal,
And saver of my life; and therefore now,
For here be mighty men to joust with, weigh
Whether thou wilt not with thy damsel back
To crave again Sir Lancelot of the King.
Thy pardon; I but speak for thine avail,
The saver of my life.'

And Gareth said,
'Full pardon, but I follow up the quest,
Despite of Day and Night and Death and Hell.'

So when, next morn, the lord whose life he saved

Had, some brief space, conveyed them on their way
And left them with God-speed, Sir Gareth spake,
'Lead, and I follow.' Haughtily she replied.

'I fly no more: I allow thee for an hour.
Lion and stout have isled together, knave,
In time of flood. Nay, furthermore, methinks
Some ruth is mine for thee. Back wilt thou, fool?
For hard by here is one will overthrow
And slay thee: then will I to court again,
And shame the King for only yielding me
My champion from the ashes of his hearth.'

To whom Sir Gareth answered courteously,
'Say thou thy say, and I will do my deed.
Allow me for mine hour, and thou wilt find
My fortunes all as fair as hers who lay
Among the ashes and wedded the King's son.'

Then to the shore of one of those long loops
Wherethrough the serpent river coiled, they came.
Rough-thicketed were the banks and steep; the stream
Full, narrow; this a bridge of single arc
Took at a leap; and on the further side
Arose a silk pavilion, gay with gold
In streaks and rays, and all Lent-lily in hue,
Save that the dome was purple, and above,
Crimson, a slender banneret fluttering.
And therebefore the lawless warrior paced
Unarmed, and calling, 'Damsel, is this he,
The champion thou hast brought from Arthur's hall?
For whom we let thee pass.' 'Nay, nay,' she said,
'Sir Morning-Star. The King in utter scorn
Of thee and thy much folly hath sent thee here
His kitchen-knave: and look thou to thyself:
See that he fall not on thee suddenly,
And slay thee unarmed: he is not knight but knave.'

Then at his call, 'O daughters of the Dawn,
And servants of the Morning-Star, approach,
Arm me,' from out the silken curtain-folds
Bare-footed and bare-headed three fair girls
In gilt and rosy raiment came: their feet
In dewy grasses glistened; and the hair
All over glanced with dewdrop or with gem
Like sparkles in the stone Avanturine.

These armed him in blue arms, and gave a shield
Blue also, and thereon the morning star.
And Gareth silent gazed upon the knight,
Who stood a moment, ere his horse was brought,
Glorying; and in the stream beneath him, shone
Immingled with Heaven's azure waveringly,
The gay pavilion and the naked feet,
His arms, the rosy raiment, and the star.

Then she that watched him, 'Wherefore stare ye so?
Thou shakest in thy fear: there yet is time:
Flee down the valley before he get to horse.
Who will cry shame? Thou art not knight but knave.'

Said Gareth, 'Damsel, whether knave or knight,
Far liefer had I fight a score of times
Than hear thee so missay me and revile.
Fair words were best for him who fights for thee;
But truly foul are better, for they send
That strength of anger through mine arms, I know
That I shall overthrow him.'

And he that bore
The star, when mounted, cried from o'er the bridge,
'A kitchen-knave, and sent in scorn of me!
Such fight not I, but answer scorn with scorn.
For this were shame to do him further wrong
Than set him on his feet, and take his horse
And arms, and so return him to the King.
Come, therefore, leave thy lady lightly, knave.
Avoid: for it beseemeth not a knave
To ride with such a lady.'

'Dog, thou liest.
I spring from loftier lineage than thine own.'
He spake; and all at fiery speed the two
Shocked on the central bridge, and either spear
Bent but not brake, and either knight at once,
Hurl'd as a stone from out of a catapult
Beyond his horse's crupper and the bridge,
Fell, as if dead; but quickly rose and drew,
And Gareth lashed so fiercely with his brand
He drove his enemy backward down the bridge,
The damsel crying, 'Well-stricken, kitchen-knave!'
Till Gareth's shield was cloven; but one stroke
Laid him that clove it grovelling on the ground.

Then cried the fallen, 'Take not my life: I yield.'
And Gareth, 'So this damsel ask it of me
Good--I accord it easily as a grace.'
She reddening, 'Insolent scullion: I of thee?
I bound to thee for any favour asked!'
'Then he shall die.' And Gareth there unlaced
His helmet as to slay him, but she shrieked,
'Be not so hardy, scullion, as to slay
One nobler than thyself.' 'Damsel, thy charge
Is an abounding pleasure to me. Knight,
Thy life is thine at her command. Arise
And quickly pass to Arthur's hall, and say
His kitchen-knave hath sent thee. See thou crave
His pardon for thy breaking of his laws.
Myself, when I return, will plead for thee.
Thy shield is mine--farewell; and, damsel, thou,
Lead, and I follow.'

And fast away she fled.
Then when he came upon her, spake, 'Methought,
Knave, when I watched thee striking on the bridge
The savour of thy kitchen came upon me
A little faintlier: but the wind hath changed:
I scent it twenty-fold.' And then she sang,
"O morning star" (not that tall felon there
Whom thou by sorcery or unhappiness
Or some device, hast foully overthrown),
"O morning star that smilest in the blue,
O star, my morning dream hath proven true,
Smile sweetly, thou! my love hath smiled on me."

'But thou begone, take counsel, and away,
For hard by here is one that guards a ford--
The second brother in their fool's parable--
Will pay thee all thy wages, and to boot.
Care not for shame: thou art not knight but knave.'

To whom Sir Gareth answered, laughingly,
'Parables? Hear a parable of the knave.
When I was kitchen-knave among the rest
Fierce was the hearth, and one of my co-mates
Owned a rough dog, to whom he cast his coat,
"Guard it," and there was none to meddle with it.
And such a coat art thou, and thee the King
Gave me to guard, and such a dog am I,

To worry, and not to flee--and--knight or knave--
The knave that doth thee service as full knight
Is all as good, meseems, as any knight
Toward thy sister's freeing.'

'Ay, Sir Knave!
Ay, knave, because thou strikest as a knight,
Being but knave, I hate thee all the more.'

'Fair damsel, you should worship me the more,
That, being but knave, I throw thine enemies.'

'Ay, ay,' she said, 'but thou shalt meet thy match.'

So when they touched the second river-loop,
Huge on a huge red horse, and all in mail
Burnished to blinding, shone the Noonday Sun
Beyond a raging shallow. As if the flower,
That blows a globe of after arrowlets,
Ten thousand-fold had grown, flashed the fierce shield,
All sun; and Gareth's eyes had flying blots
Before them when he turned from watching him.
He from beyond the roaring shallow roared,
'What doest thou, brother, in my marches here?'
And she athwart the shallow shrilled again,
'Here is a kitchen-knave from Arthur's hall
Hath overthrown thy brother, and hath his arms.'
'Ugh!' cried the Sun, and vizoring up a red
And cipher face of rounded foolishness,
Pushed horse across the foamings of the ford,
Whom Gareth met midstream: no room was there
For lance or tourney-skill: four strokes they struck
With sword, and these were mighty; the new knight
Had fear he might be shamed; but as the Sun
Heaved up a ponderous arm to strike the fifth,
The hoof of his horse slipt in the stream, the stream
Descended, and the Sun was washed away.

Then Gareth laid his lance athwart the ford;
So drew him home; but he that fought no more,
As being all bone-battered on the rock,
Yielded; and Gareth sent him to the King,
'Myself when I return will plead for thee.'
'Lead, and I follow.' Quietly she led.
'Hath not the good wind, damsel, changed again?'
'Nay, not a point: nor art thou victor here.'

There lies a ridge of slate across the ford;
His horse thereon stumbled--ay, for I saw it.

"O Sun" (not this strong fool whom thou, Sir Knave,
Hast overthrown through mere unhappiness),
"O Sun, that wakenest all to bliss or pain,
O moon, that layest all to sleep again,
Shine sweetly: twice my love hath smiled on me."

What knowest thou of lovesong or of love?
Nay, nay, God wot, so thou wert nobly born,
Thou hast a pleasant presence. Yea, perchance,--

"O dewy flowers that open to the sun,
O dewy flowers that close when day is done,
Blow sweetly: twice my love hath smiled on me."

'What knowest thou of flowers, except, belike,
To garnish meats with? hath not our good King
Who lent me thee, the flower of kitchendom,
A foolish love for flowers? what stick ye round
The pasty? wherewithal deck the boar's head?
Flowers? nay, the boar hath rosemaries and bay.

"O birds, that warble to the morning sky,
O birds that warble as the day goes by,
Sing sweetly: twice my love hath smiled on me."

'What knowest thou of birds, lark, mavis, merle,
Linnet? what dream ye when they utter forth
May-music growing with the growing light,
Their sweet sun-worship? these be for the snare
(So runs thy fancy) these be for the spit,
Larding and basting. See thou have not now
Larded thy last, except thou turn and fly.
There stands the third fool of their allegory.'

For there beyond a bridge of treble bow,
All in a rose-red from the west, and all
Naked it seemed, and glowing in the broad
Deep-dimpled current underneath, the knight,
That named himself the Star of Evening, stood.

And Gareth, 'Wherefore waits the madman there
Naked in open dayshine?' 'Nay,' she cried,
'Not naked, only wrapt in hardened skins

That fit him like his own; and so ye cleave
His armour off him, these will turn the blade.'

Then the third brother shouted o'er the bridge,
'O brother-star, why shine ye here so low?
Thy ward is higher up: but have ye slain
The damsel's champion?' and the damsel cried,

'No star of thine, but shot from Arthur's heaven
With all disaster unto thine and thee!
For both thy younger brethren have gone down
Before this youth; and so wilt thou, Sir Star;
Art thou not old?'

'Old, damsel, old and hard,
Old, with the might and breath of twenty boys.'
Said Gareth, 'Old, and over-bold in brag!
But that same strength which threw the Morning Star
Can throw the Evening.'

Then that other blew
A hard and deadly note upon the horn.
'Approach and arm me!' With slow steps from out
An old storm-beaten, russet, many-stained
Pavilion, forth a grizzled damsel came,
And armed him in old arms, and brought a helm
With but a drying evergreen for crest,
And gave a shield whereon the Star of Even
Half-tarnished and half-bright, his emblem, shone.
But when it glittered o'er the saddle-bow,
They madly hurled together on the bridge;
And Gareth overthrew him, lighted, drew,
There met him drawn, and overthrew him again,
But up like fire he started: and as oft
As Gareth brought him grovelling on his knees,
So many a time he vaulted up again;
Till Gareth panted hard, and his great heart,
Foredooming all his trouble was in vain,
Laboured within him, for he seemed as one
That all in later, sadder age begins
To war against ill uses of a life,
But these from all his life arise, and cry,
'Thou hast made us lords, and canst not put us down!'
He half despairs; so Gareth seemed to strike
Vainly, the damsel clamouring all the while,
'Well done, knave-knight, well-stricken, O good knight-knave--
O knave, as noble as any of all the knights--

Shame me not, shame me not. I have prophesied--
Strike, thou art worthy of the Table Round--
His arms are old, he trusts the hardened skin--
Strike--strike--the wind will never change again.'
And Gareth hearing ever stronglier smote,
And hewed great pieces of his armour off him,
But lashed in vain against the hardened skin,
And could not wholly bring him under, more
Than loud Southwesterns, rolling ridge on ridge,
The buoy that rides at sea, and dips and springs
For ever; till at length Sir Gareth's brand
Clashed his, and brake it utterly to the hilt.
'I have thee now;' but forth that other sprang,
And, all unknightlike, writhed his wiry arms
Around him, till he felt, despite his mail,
Strangled, but straining even his uttermost
Cast, and so hurled him headlong o'er the bridge
Down to the river, sink or swim, and cried,
'Lead, and I follow.'

But the damsel said,
'I lead no longer; ride thou at my side;
Thou art the kingliest of all kitchen-knaves.

"O trefoil, sparkling on the rainy plain,
O rainbow with three colours after rain,
Shine sweetly: thrice my love hath smiled on me."

'Sir,--and, good faith, I fain had added--Knight,
But that I heard thee call thyself a knave,--
Shamed am I that I so rebuked, reviled,
Missaid thee; noble I am; and thought the King
Scorned me and mine; and now thy pardon, friend,
For thou hast ever answered courteously,
And wholly bold thou art, and meek withal
As any of Arthur's best, but, being knave,
Hast mazed my wit: I marvel what thou art.'

'Damsel,' he said, 'you be not all to blame,
Saving that you mistrusted our good King
Would handle scorn, or yield you, asking, one
Not fit to cope your quest. You said your say;
Mine answer was my deed. Good sooth! I hold
He scarce is knight, yea but half-man, nor meet
To fight for gentle damsel, he, who lets
His heart be stirred with any foolish heat

At any gentle damsel's waywardness.
Shamed? care not! thy foul sayings fought for me:
And seeing now thy words are fair, methinks
There rides no knight, not Lancelot, his great self,
Hath force to quell me.'

Nigh upon that hour

When the lone hennet forgets his melancholy,
Lays down his other leg, and stretching, dreams
Of goodly supper in the distant pool,
Then turned the noble damsel smiling at him,
And told him of a cavern hard at hand,
Where bread and baken meats and good red wine
Of Southland, which the Lady Lyonors
Had sent her coming champion, waited him.

Anon they past a narrow comb wherein
Where slabs of rock with figures, knights on horse
Sculptured, and deckt in slowly-waning hues.
'Sir Knave, my knight, a hermit once was here,
Whose holy hand hath fashioned on the rock
The war of Time against the soul of man.
And yon four fools have sucked their allegory
From these damp walls, and taken but the form.
Know ye not these?' and Gareth lookt and read--
In letters like to those the vexillary
Hath left crag-carven o'er the streaming Gelt--
'PHOSPHORUS,' then 'MERIDIES'--'HESPERUS'--
'NOX'--'MORS,' beneath five figures, armed men,
Slab after slab, their faces forward all,
And running down the Soul, a Shape that fled
With broken wings, torn raiment and loose hair,
For help and shelter to the hermit's cave.
'Follow the faces, and we find it. Look,
Who comes behind?'

For one--delayed at first

Through helping back the dislocated Kay
To Camelot, then by what thereafter chanced,
The damsel's headlong error through the wood--
Sir Lancelot, having swum the river-loops--
His blue shield-lions covered--softly drew
Behind the twain, and when he saw the star
Gleam, on Sir Gareth's turning to him, cried,
'Stay, felon knight, I avenge me for my friend.'
And Gareth crying pricked against the cry;
But when they closed--in a moment--at one touch

Of that skilled spear, the wonder of the world--
Went sliding down so easily, and fell,
That when he found the grass within his hands
He laughed; the laughter jarred upon Lynette:
Harshly she asked him, 'Shamed and overthrown,
And tumbled back into the kitchen-knave,
Why laugh ye? that ye blew your boast in vain?'
'Nay, noble damsel, but that I, the son
Of old King Lot and good Queen Bellicent,
And victor of the bridges and the ford,
And knight of Arthur, here lie thrown by whom
I know not, all through mere unhappiness--
Device and sorcery and unhappiness--
Out, sword; we are thrown!' And Lancelot answered, 'Prince,
O Gareth--through the mere unhappiness
Of one who came to help thee, not to harm,
Lancelot, and all as glad to find thee whole,
As on the day when Arthur knighted him.'

Then Gareth, 'Thou--Lancelot!--thine the hand
That threw me? An some chance to mar the boast
Thy brethren of thee make--which could not chance--
Had sent thee down before a lesser spear,
Shamed had I been, and sad--O Lancelot--thou!'

Whereat the maiden, petulant, 'Lancelot,
Why came ye not, when called? and wherefore now
Come ye, not called? I gloried in my knave,
Who being still rebuked, would answer still
Courteous as any knight--but now, if knight,
The marvel dies, and leaves me fooled and tricked,
And only wondering wherefore played upon:
And doubtful whether I and mine be scorned.
Where should be truth if not in Arthur's hall,
In Arthur's presence? Knight, knave, prince and fool,
I hate thee and for ever.'

And Lancelot said,
'Blessd be thou, Sir Gareth! knight art thou
To the King's best wish. O damsel, be you wise
To call him shamed, who is but overthrown?
Thrown have I been, nor once, but many a time.
Victor from vanquished issues at the last,
And overthrower from being overthrown.
With sword we have not striven; and thy good horse
And thou are weary; yet not less I felt

Thy manhood through that wearied lance of thine.
Well hast thou done; for all the stream is freed,
And thou hast wreaked his justice on his foes,
And when reviled, hast answered graciously,
And makest merry when overthrown. Prince, Knight
Hail, Knight and Prince, and of our Table Round!

And then when turning to Lynette he told
The tale of Gareth, petulantly she said,
'Ay well--ay well--for worse than being fooled
Of others, is to fool one's self. A cave,
Sir Lancelot, is hard by, with meats and drinks
And forage for the horse, and flint for fire.
But all about it flies a honeysuckle.
Seek, till we find.' And when they sought and found,
Sir Gareth drank and ate, and all his life
Past into sleep; on whom the maiden gazed.
'Sound sleep be thine! sound cause to sleep hast thou.
Wake lusty! Seem I not as tender to him
As any mother? Ay, but such a one
As all day long hath rated at her child,
And vext his day, but blesses him asleep--
Good lord, how sweetly smells the honeysuckle
In the hushed night, as if the world were one
Of utter peace, and love, and gentleness!
O Lancelot, Lancelot!--and she clapt her hands--
'Full merry am I to find my goodly knave
Is knight and noble. See now, sworn have I,
Else yon black felon had not let me pass,
To bring thee back to do the battle with him.
Thus an thou goest, he will fight thee first;
Who doubts thee victor? so will my knight-knave
Miss the full flower of this accomplishment.'

Said Lancelot, 'Peradventure he, you name,
May know my shield. Let Gareth, an he will,
Change his for mine, and take my charger, fresh,
Not to be spurred, loving the battle as well
As he that rides him.' 'Lancelot-like,' she said,
'Courteous in this, Lord Lancelot, as in all.'

And Gareth, wakening, fiercely clutched the shield;
'Ramp ye lance-splintering lions, on whom all spears
Are rotten sticks! ye seem agape to roar!
Yea, ramp and roar at leaving of your lord!--
Care not, good beasts, so well I care for you.

O noble Lancelot, from my hold on these
Streams virtue--fire--through one that will not shame
Even the shadow of Lancelot under shield.
Hence: let us go.'

Silent the silent field
They traversed. Arthur's harp though summer-wan,
In counter motion to the clouds, allured
The glance of Gareth dreaming on his liege.
A star shot: 'Lo,' said Gareth, 'the foe falls!'
An owl whoopt: 'Hark the victor pealing there!'
Suddenly she that rode upon his left
Clung to the shield that Lancelot lent him, crying,
'Yield, yield him this again: 'tis he must fight:
I curse the tongue that all through yesterday
Reviled thee, and hath wrought on Lancelot now
To lend thee horse and shield: wonders ye have done;
Miracles ye cannot: here is glory enow
In having flung the three: I see thee maimed,
Mangled: I swear thou canst not fling the fourth.'

'And wherefore, damsel? tell me all ye know.
You cannot scare me; nor rough face, or voice,
Brute bulk of limb, or boundless savagery
Appal me from the quest.'

'Nay, Prince,' she cried,
'God wot, I never looked upon the face,
Seeing he never rides abroad by day;
But watched him have I like a phantom pass
Chilling the night: nor have I heard the voice.
Always he made his mouthpiece of a page
Who came and went, and still reported him
As closing in himself the strength of ten,
And when his anger tare him, massacring
Man, woman, lad and girl--yea, the soft babe!
Some hold that he hath swallowed infant flesh,
Monster! O Prince, I went for Lancelot first,
The quest is Lancelot's: give him back the shield.'

Said Gareth laughing, 'An he fight for this,
Belike he wins it as the better man:
Thus--and not else!'

But Lancelot on him urged
All the devisings of their chivalry

When one might meet a mightier than himself;
How best to manage horse, lance, sword and shield,
And so fill up the gap where force might fail
With skill and fineness. Instant were his words.

Then Gareth, 'Here be rules. I know but one--
To dash against mine enemy and win.
Yet have I seen thee victor in the joust,
And seen thy way.' 'Heaven help thee,' sighed Lynette.

Then for a space, and under cloud that grew
To thunder-gloom palling all stars, they rode
In converse till she made her palfrey halt,
Lifted an arm, and softly whispered, 'There.'
And all the three were silent seeing, pitched
Beside the Castle Perilous on flat field,
A huge pavilion like a mountain peak
Sunder the glooming crimson on the marge,
Black, with black banner, and a long black horn
Beside it hanging; which Sir Gareth graspt,
And so, before the two could hinder him,
Sent all his heart and breath through all the horn.
Echoed the walls; a light twinkled; anon
Came lights and lights, and once again he blew;
Whereon were hollow tramlings up and down
And muffled voices heard, and shadows past;
Till high above him, circled with her maids,
The Lady Lyonors at a window stood,
Beautiful among lights, and waving to him
White hands, and courtesy; but when the Prince
Three times had blown--after long hush--at last--
The huge pavilion slowly yielded up,
Through those black foldings, that which housed therein.
High on a nightblack horse, in nightblack arms,
With white breast-bone, and barren ribs of Death,
And crowned with fleshless laughter--some ten steps--
In the half-light--through the dim dawn--advanced
The monster, and then paused, and spake no word.

But Gareth spake and all indignantly,
'Fool, for thou hast, men say, the strength of ten,
Canst thou not trust the limbs thy God hath given,
But must, to make the terror of thee more,
Trick thyself out in ghastly imageries
Of that which Life hath done with, and the clod,
Less dull than thou, will hide with mantling flowers

As if for pity?' But he spake no word;
Which set the horror higher: a maiden swooned;
The Lady Lyonors wrung her hands and wept,
As doomed to be the bride of Night and Death;
Sir Gareth's head prickled beneath his helm;
And even Sir Lancelot through his warm blood felt
Ice strike, and all that marked him were aghast.

At once Sir Lancelot's charger fiercely neighed,
And Death's dark war-horse bounded forward with him.
Then those that did not blink the terror, saw
That Death was cast to ground, and slowly rose.
But with one stroke Sir Gareth split the skull.
Half fell to right and half to left and lay.
Then with a stronger buffet he clove the helm
As throughly as the skull; and out from this
Issued the bright face of a blooming boy
Fresh as a flower new-born, and crying, 'Knight,
Slay me not: my three brethren bad me do it,
To make a horror all about the house,
And stay the world from Lady Lyonors.
They never dreamed the passes would be past.'
Answered Sir Gareth graciously to one
Not many a moon his younger, 'My fair child,
What madness made thee challenge the chief knight
Of Arthur's hall?' 'Fair Sir, they bad me do it.
They hate the King, and Lancelot, the King's friend,
They hoped to slay him somewhere on the stream,
They never dreamed the passes could be past.'

Then sprang the happier day from underground;
And Lady Lyonors and her house, with dance
And revel and song, made merry over Death,
As being after all their foolish fears
And horrors only proven a blooming boy.
So large mirth lived and Gareth won the quest.

And he that told the tale in older times
Says that Sir Gareth wedded Lyonors,
But he, that told it later, says Lynette.

The Marriage of Geraint

The brave Geraint, a knight of Arthur's court,
A tributary prince of Devon, one
Of that great Order of the Table Round,
Had married Enid, Yniol's only child,
And loved her, as he loved the light of Heaven.
And as the light of Heaven varies, now
At sunrise, now at sunset, now by night
With moon and trembling stars, so loved Geraint
To make her beauty vary day by day,
In crimsons and in purples and in gems.
And Enid, but to please her husband's eye,
Who first had found and loved her in a state
Of broken fortunes, daily fronted him
In some fresh splendour; and the Queen herself,
Grateful to Prince Geraint for service done,
Loved her, and often with her own white hands
Arrayed and decked her, as the loveliest,
Next after her own self, in all the court.
And Enid loved the Queen, and with true heart
Adored her, as the stateliest and the best
And loveliest of all women upon earth.
And seeing them so tender and so close,
Long in their common love rejoiced Geraint.
But when a rumour rose about the Queen,
Touching her guilty love for Lancelot,
Though yet there lived no proof, nor yet was heard
The world's loud whisper breaking into storm,
Not less Geraint believed it; and there fell
A horror on him, lest his gentle wife,
Through that great tenderness for Guinevere,
Had suffered, or should suffer any taint
In nature: wherefore going to the King,
He made this pretext, that his principedom lay
Close on the borders of a territory,
Wherein were bandit earls, and caitiff knights,
Assassins, and all flyers from the hand
Of Justice, and whatever loathes a law:
And therefore, till the King himself should please
To cleanse this common sewer of all his realm,
He craved a fair permission to depart,
And there defend his marches; and the King
Mused for a little on his plea, but, last,

Allowing it, the Prince and Enid rode,
And fifty knights rode with them, to the shores
Of Severn, and they past to their own land;
Where, thinking, that if ever yet was wife
True to her lord, mine shall be so to me,
He compassed her with sweet observances
And worship, never leaving her, and grew
Forgetful of his promise to the King,
Forgetful of the falcon and the hunt,
Forgetful of the tilt and tournament,
Forgetful of his glory and his name,
Forgetful of his pryncedom and its cares.
And this forgetfulness was hateful to her.
And by and by the people, when they met
In twos and threes, or fuller companies,
Began to scoff and jeer and babble of him
As of a prince whose manhood was all gone,
And molten down in mere uxoriousness.
And this she gathered from the people's eyes:
This too the women who attired her head,
To please her, dwelling on his boundless love,
Told Enid, and they saddened her the more:
And day by day she thought to tell Geraint,
But could not out of bashful delicacy;
While he that watched her sadden, was the more
Suspicious that her nature had a taint.

At last, it chanced that on a summer morn
(They sleeping each by either) the new sun
Beat through the blindless casement of the room,
And heated the strong warrior in his dreams;
Who, moving, cast the coverlet aside,
And bared the knotted column of his throat,
The massive square of his heroic breast,
And arms on which the standing muscle sloped,
As slopes a wild brook o'er a little stone,
Running too vehemently to break upon it.
And Enid woke and sat beside the couch,
Admiring him, and thought within herself,
Was ever man so grandly made as he?
Then, like a shadow, past the people's talk
And accusation of uxoriousness
Across her mind, and bowing over him,
Low to her own heart piteously she said:

'O noble breast and all-puissant arms,

Am I the cause, I the poor cause that men
Reproach you, saying all your force is gone?
I AM the cause, because I dare not speak
And tell him what I think and what they say.
And yet I hate that he should linger here;
I cannot love my lord and not his name.
Far liefer had I gird his harness on him,
And ride with him to battle and stand by,
And watch his mightful hand striking great blows
At caitiffs and at wrongers of the world.
Far better were I laid in the dark earth,
Not hearing any more his noble voice,
Not to be folded more in these dear arms,
And darkened from the high light in his eyes,
Than that my lord through me should suffer shame.
Am I so bold, and could I so stand by,
And see my dear lord wounded in the strife,
And maybe pierced to death before mine eyes,
And yet not dare to tell him what I think,
And how men slur him, saying all his force
Is melted into mere effeminacy?
O me, I fear that I am no true wife.'

Half inwardly, half audibly she spoke,
And the strong passion in her made her weep
True tears upon his broad and naked breast,
And these awoke him, and by great mischance
He heard but fragments of her later words,
And that she feared she was not a true wife.
And then he thought, 'In spite of all my care,
For all my pains, poor man, for all my pains,
She is not faithful to me, and I see her
Weeping for some gay knight in Arthur's hall.'
Then though he loved and revered her too much
To dream she could be guilty of foul act,
Right through his manful breast darted the pang
That makes a man, in the sweet face of her
Whom he loves most, lonely and miserable.
At this he hurled his huge limbs out of bed,
And shook his drowsy squire awake and cried,
'My charger and her palfrey;' then to her,
'I will ride forth into the wilderness;
For though it seems my spurs are yet to win,
I have not fallen so low as some would wish.
And thou, put on thy worst and meanest dress
And ride with me.' And Enid asked, amazed,

'If Enid errs, let Enid learn her fault.'
But he, 'I charge thee, ask not, but obey.'
Then she bethought her of a faded silk,
A faded mantle and a faded veil,
And moving toward a cedarn cabinet,
Wherein she kept them folded reverently
With sprigs of summer laid between the folds,
She took them, and arrayed herself therein,
Remembering when first he came on her
Drest in that dress, and how he loved her in it,
And all her foolish fears about the dress,
And all his journey to her, as himself
Had told her, and their coming to the court.

For Arthur on the Whitsuntide before
Held court at old Caerleon upon Usk.
There on a day, he sitting high in hall,
Before him came a forester of Dean,
Wet from the woods, with notice of a hart
Taller than all his fellows, milky-white,
First seen that day: these things he told the King.
Then the good King gave order to let blow
His horns for hunting on the morrow morn.
And when the King petitioned for his leave
To see the hunt, allowed it easily.
So with the morning all the court were gone.
But Guinevere lay late into the morn,
Lost in sweet dreams, and dreaming of her love
For Lancelot, and forgetful of the hunt;
But rose at last, a single maiden with her,
Took horse, and forded Usk, and gained the wood;
There, on a little knoll beside it, stayed
Waiting to hear the hounds; but heard instead
A sudden sound of hoofs, for Prince Geraint,
Late also, wearing neither hunting-dress
Nor weapon, save a golden-hilted brand,
Came quickly flashing through the shallow ford
Behind them, and so galloped up the knoll.
A purple scarf, at either end whereof
There swung an apple of the purest gold,
Swayed round about him, as he galloped up
To join them, glancing like a dragon-fly
In summer suit and silks of holiday.
Low bowed the tributary Prince, and she,
Sweet and statelily, and with all grace
Of womanhood and queenhood, answered him:

'Late, late, Sir Prince,' she said, 'later than we!'
'Yea, noble Queen,' he answered, 'and so late
That I but come like you to see the hunt,
Not join it.' 'Therefore wait with me,' she said;
'For on this little knoll, if anywhere,
There is good chance that we shall hear the hounds:
Here often they break covert at our feet.'

And while they listened for the distant hunt,
And chiefly for the baying of Cavall,
King Arthur's hound of deepest mouth, there rode
Full slowly by a knight, lady, and dwarf;
Whereof the dwarf lagged latest, and the knight
Had vizor up, and showed a youthful face,
Imperious, and of haughtiest lineaments.
And Guinevere, not mindful of his face
In the King's hall, desired his name, and sent
Her maiden to demand it of the dwarf;
Who being vicious, old and irritable,
And doubling all his master's vice of pride,
Made answer sharply that she should not know.
'Then will I ask it of himself,' she said.
'Nay, by my faith, thou shalt not,' cried the dwarf;
'Thou art not worthy even to speak of him;'
And when she put her horse toward the knight,
Struck at her with his whip, and she returned
Indignant to the Queen; whereat Geraint
Exclaiming, 'Surely I will learn the name,'
Made sharply to the dwarf, and asked it of him,
Who answered as before; and when the Prince
Had put his horse in motion toward the knight,
Struck at him with his whip, and cut his cheek.
The Prince's blood spirted upon the scarf,
Dyeing it; and his quick, instinctive hand
Caught at the hilt, as to abolish him:
But he, from his exceeding manfulness
And pure nobility of temperament,
Wroth to be wroth at such a worm, refrained
From even a word, and so returning said:

'I will avenge this insult, noble Queen,
Done in your maiden's person to yourself:
And I will track this vermin to their earths:
For though I ride unarmed, I do not doubt
To find, at some place I shall come at, arms
On loan, or else for pledge; and, being found,

Then will I fight him, and will break his pride,
And on the third day will again be here,
So that I be not fallen in fight. Farewell.'

'Farewell, fair Prince,' answered the stately Queen.
'Be prosperous in this journey, as in all;
And may you light on all things that you love,
And live to wed with her whom first you love:
But ere you wed with any, bring your bride,
And I, were she the daughter of a king,
Yea, though she were a beggar from the hedge,
Will clothe her for her bridals like the sun.'

And Prince Geraint, now thinking that he heard
The noble hart at bay, now the far horn,
A little vexed at losing of the hunt,
A little at the vile occasion, rode,
By ups and downs, through many a grassy glade
And valley, with fixt eye following the three.
At last they issued from the world of wood,
And climbed upon a fair and even ridge,
And showed themselves against the sky, and sank.
And thither there came Geraint, and underneath
Beheld the long street of a little town
In a long valley, on one side whereof,
White from the mason's hand, a fortress rose;
And on one side a castle in decay,
Beyond a bridge that spanned a dry ravine:
And out of town and valley came a noise
As of a broad brook o'er a shingly bed
Brawling, or like a clamour of the rooks
At distance, ere they settle for the night.

And onward to the fortress rode the three,
And entered, and were lost behind the walls.
'So,' thought Geraint, 'I have tracked him to his earth.'
And down the long street riding wearily,
Found every hostel full, and everywhere
Was hammer laid to hoof, and the hot hiss
And bustling whistle of the youth who scoured
His master's armour; and of such a one
He asked, 'What means the tumult in the town?'
Who told him, scouring still, 'The sparrow-hawk!'
Then riding close behind an ancient churl,
Who, smitten by the dusty sloping beam,
Went sweating underneath a sack of corn,

Asked yet once more what meant the hubbub here?
Who answered gruffly, 'Ugh! the sparrow-hawk.'
Then riding further past an armourer's,
Who, with back turned, and bowed above his work,
Sat riveting a helmet on his knee,
He put the self-same query, but the man
Not turning round, nor looking at him, said:
'Friend, he that labours for the sparrow-hawk
Has little time for idle questioners.'
Whereat Geraint flashed into sudden spleen:
'A thousand pips eat up your sparrow-hawk!
Tits, wrens, and all winged nothings peck him dead!
Ye think the rustic cackle of your bourg
The murmur of the world! What is it to me?
O wretched set of sparrows, one and all,
Who pipe of nothing but of sparrow-hawks!
Speak, if ye be not like the rest, hawk-mad,
Where can I get me harbourage for the night?
And arms, arms, arms to fight my enemy? Speak!
Whereat the armourer turning all amazed
And seeing one so gay in purple silks,
Came forward with the helmet yet in hand
And answered, 'Pardon me, O stranger knight;
We hold a tourney here tomorrow morn,
And there is scanty time for half the work.
Arms? truth! I know not: all are wanted here.
Harbourage? truth, good truth, I know not, save,
It may be, at Earl Yniol's, o'er the bridge
Yonder.' He spoke and fell to work again.

Then rode Geraint, a little spleenful yet,
Across the bridge that spanned the dry ravine.
There musing sat the hoary-headed Earl,
(His dress a suit of frayed magnificence,
Once fit for feasts of ceremony) and said:
'Whither, fair son?' to whom Geraint replied,
'O friend, I seek a harbourage for the night.'
Then Yniol, 'Enter therefore and partake
The slender entertainment of a house
Once rich, now poor, but ever open-doored.'
'Thanks, venerable friend,' replied Geraint;
'So that ye do not serve me sparrow-hawks
For supper, I will enter, I will eat
With all the passion of a twelve hours' fast.'
Then sighed and smiled the hoary-headed Earl,
And answered, 'Graver cause than yours is mine

To curse this hedgerow thief, the sparrow-hawk:
But in, go in; for save yourself desire it,
We will not touch upon him even in jest.'

Then rode Geraint into the castle court,
His charger trampling many a prickly star
Of sprouted thistle on the broken stones.
He looked and saw that all was ruinous.
Here stood a shattered archway plumed with fern;
And here had fallen a great part of a tower,
Whole, like a crag that tumbles from the cliff,
And like a crag was gay with wilding flowers:
And high above a piece of turret stair,
Worn by the feet that now were silent, wound
Bare to the sun, and monstrous ivy-stems
Claspt the gray walls with hairy-fibred arms,
And sucked the joining of the stones, and looked
A knot, beneath, of snakes, aloft, a grove.

And while he waited in the castle court,
The voice of Enid, Yniol's daughter, rang
Clear through the open casement of the hall,
Singing; and as the sweet voice of a bird,
Heard by the lander in a lonely isle,
Moves him to think what kind of bird it is
That sings so delicately clear, and make
Conjecture of the plumage and the form;
So the sweet voice of Enid moved Geraint;
And made him like a man abroad at morn
When first the liquid note beloved of men
Comes flying over many a windy wave
To Britain, and in April suddenly
Breaks from a coppice gemmed with green and red,
And he suspends his converse with a friend,
Or it may be the labour of his hands,
To think or say, 'There is the nightingale;'
So fared it with Geraint, who thought and said,
'Here, by God's grace, is the one voice for me.'

It chanced the song that Enid sang was one
Of Fortune and her wheel, and Enid sang:

'Turn, Fortune, turn thy wheel and lower the proud;
Turn thy wild wheel through sunshine, storm, and cloud;
Thy wheel and thee we neither love nor hate.

'Turn, Fortune, turn thy wheel with smile or frown;
With that wild wheel we go not up or down;
Our hoard is little, but our hearts are great.

'Smile and we smile, the lords of many lands;
Frown and we smile, the lords of our own hands;
For man is man and master of his fate.

'Turn, turn thy wheel above the staring crowd;
Thy wheel and thou are shadows in the cloud;
Thy wheel and thee we neither love nor hate.'

'Hark, by the bird's song ye may learn the nest,'
Said Yniol; 'enter quickly.' Entering then,
Right o'er a mount of newly-fallen stones,
The dusky-raftered many-cobwebbed hall,
He found an ancient dame in dim brocade;
And near her, like a blossom vermeil-white,
That lightly breaks a faded flower-sheath,
Moved the fair Enid, all in faded silk,
Her daughter. In a moment thought Geraint,
'Here by God's rood is the one maid for me.'
But none spake word except the hoary Earl:
'Enid, the good knight's horse stands in the court;
Take him to stall, and give him corn, and then
Go to the town and buy us flesh and wine;
And we will make us merry as we may.
Our hoard is little, but our hearts are great.'

He spake: the Prince, as Enid past him, fain
To follow, strode a stride, but Yniol caught
His purple scarf, and held, and said, 'Forbear!
Rest! the good house, though ruined, O my son,
Endures not that her guest should serve himself.'
And reverencing the custom of the house
Geraint, from utter courtesy, forbore.

So Enid took his charger to the stall;
And after went her way across the bridge,
And reached the town, and while the Prince and Earl
Yet spoke together, came again with one,
A youth, that following with a costrel bore
The means of goodly welcome, flesh and wine.
And Enid brought sweet cakes to make them cheer,
And in her veil enfolded, manchet bread.
And then, because their hall must also serve

For kitchen, boiled the flesh, and spread the board,
And stood behind, and waited on the three.
And seeing her so sweet and serviceable,
Geraint had longing in him evermore
To stoop and kiss the tender little thumb,
That crost the trencher as she laid it down:
But after all had eaten, then Geraint,
For now the wine made summer in his veins,
Let his eye rove in following, or rest
On Enid at her lowly handmaid-work,
Now here, now there, about the dusky hall;
Then suddenly address the hoary Earl:

'Fair Host and Earl, I pray your courtesy;
This sparrow-hawk, what is he? tell me of him.
His name? but no, good faith, I will not have it:
For if he be the knight whom late I saw
Ride into that new fortress by your town,
White from the mason's hand, then have I sworn
From his own lips to have it--I am Geraint
Of Devon--for this morning when the Queen
Sent her own maiden to demand the name,
His dwarf, a vicious under-shapen thing,
Struck at her with his whip, and she returned
Indignant to the Queen; and then I swore
That I would track this caitiff to his hold,
And fight and break his pride, and have it of him.
And all unarmed I rode, and thought to find
Arms in your town, where all the men are mad;
They take the rustic murmur of their bourg
For the great wave that echoes round the world;
They would not hear me speak: but if ye know
Where I can light on arms, or if yourself
Should have them, tell me, seeing I have sworn
That I will break his pride and learn his name,
Avenging this great insult done the Queen.'

Then cried Earl Yniol, 'Art thou he indeed,
Geraint, a name far-sounded among men
For noble deeds? and truly I, when first
I saw you moving by me on the bridge,
Felt ye were somewhat, yea, and by your state
And presence might have guessed you one of those
That eat in Arthur's hall in Camelot.
Nor speak I now from foolish flattery;
For this dear child hath often heard me praise

Your feats of arms, and often when I paused
Hath asked again, and ever loved to hear;
So grateful is the noise of noble deeds
To noble hearts who see but acts of wrong:
O never yet had woman such a pair
Of suitors as this maiden: first Limours,
A creature wholly given to brawls and wine,
Drunk even when he wooed; and be he dead
I know not, but he past to the wild land.
The second was your foe, the sparrow-hawk,
My curse, my nephew--I will not let his name
Slip from my lips if I can help it--he,
When that I knew him fierce and turbulent
Refused her to him, then his pride awoke;
And since the proud man often is the mean,
He sowed a slander in the common ear,
Affirming that his father left him gold,
And in my charge, which was not rendered to him;
Bribed with large promises the men who served
About my person, the more easily
Because my means were somewhat broken into
Through open doors and hospitality;
Raised my own town against me in the night
Before my Enid's birthday, sacked my house;
From mine own earldom foully ousted me;
Built that new fort to overawe my friends,
For truly there are those who love me yet;
And keeps me in this ruinous castle here,
Where doubtless he would put me soon to death,
But that his pride too much despises me:
And I myself sometimes despise myself;
For I have let men be, and have their way;
Am much too gentle, have not used my power:
Nor know I whether I be very base
Or very manful, whether very wise
Or very foolish; only this I know,
That whatsoever evil happen to me,
I seem to suffer nothing heart or limb,
But can endure it all most patiently.'

'Well said, true heart,' replied Geraint, 'but arms,
That if the sparrow-hawk, this nephew, fight
In next day's tourney I may break his pride.'

And Yniol answered, 'Arms, indeed, but old
And rusty, old and rusty, Prince Geraint,

Are mine, and therefore at thy asking, thine.
But in this tournament can no man tilt,
Except the lady he loves best be there.
Two forks are fixt into the meadow ground,
And over these is placed a silver wand,
And over that a golden sparrow-hawk,
The prize of beauty for the fairest there.
And this, what knight soever be in field
Lays claim to for the lady at his side,
And tilts with my good nephew thereupon,
Who being apt at arms and big of bone
Has ever won it for the lady with him,
And toppling over all antagonism
Has earned himself the name of sparrow-hawk.'
But thou, that hast no lady, canst not fight.'

To whom Geraint with eyes all bright replied,
Leaning a little toward him, 'Thy leave!
Let ME lay lance in rest, O noble host,
For this dear child, because I never saw,
Though having seen all beauties of our time,
Nor can see elsewhere, anything so fair.
And if I fall her name will yet remain
Untarnished as before; but if I live,
So aid me Heaven when at mine uttermost,
As I will make her truly my true wife.'

Then, howsoever patient, Yniol's heart
Danced in his bosom, seeing better days,
And looking round he saw not Enid there,
(Who hearing her own name had stolen away)
But that old dame, to whom full tenderly
And folding all her hand in his he said,
'Mother, a maiden is a tender thing,
And best by her that bore her understood.
Go thou to rest, but ere thou go to rest
Tell her, and prove her heart toward the Prince.'

So spake the kindly-hearted Earl, and she
With frequent smile and nod departing found,
Half disarrayed as to her rest, the girl;
Whom first she kissed on either cheek, and then
On either shining shoulder laid a hand,
And kept her off and gazed upon her face,
And told them all their converse in the hall,
Proving her heart: but never light and shade

Coursed one another more on open ground
Beneath a troubled heaven, than red and pale
Across the face of Enid hearing her;
While slowly falling as a scale that falls,
When weight is added only grain by grain,
Sank her sweet head upon her gentle breast;
Nor did she lift an eye nor speak a word,
Rapt in the fear and in the wonder of it;
So moving without answer to her rest
She found no rest, and ever failed to draw
The quiet night into her blood, but lay
Contemplating her own unworthiness;
And when the pale and bloodless east began
To quicken to the sun, arose, and raised
Her mother too, and hand in hand they moved
Down to the meadow where the jousts were held,
And waited there for Yniol and Geraint.

And thither came the twain, and when Geraint
Beheld her first in field, awaiting him,
He felt, were she the prize of bodily force,
Himself beyond the rest pushing could move
The chair of Idris. Yniol's rusted arms
Were on his princely person, but through these
Princelike his bearing shone; and errant knights
And ladies came, and by and by the town
Flowed in, and settling circled all the lists.
And there they fixt the forks into the ground,
And over these they placed the silver wand,
And over that the golden sparrow-hawk.
Then Yniol's nephew, after trumpet blown,
Spake to the lady with him and proclaimed,
'Advance and take, as fairest of the fair,
What I these two years past have won for thee,
The prize of beauty.' Loudly spake the Prince,
'Forbear: there is a worthier,' and the knight
With some surprise and thrice as much disdain
Turned, and beheld the four, and all his face
Glowed like the heart of a great fire at Yule,
So burnt he was with passion, crying out,
'Do battle for it then,' no more; and thrice
They clashed together, and thrice they brake their spears.
Then each, dishorsed and drawing, lashed at each
So often and with such blows, that all the crowd
Wondered, and now and then from distant walls
There came a clapping as of phantom hands.

So twice they fought, and twice they breathed, and still
The dew of their great labour, and the blood
Of their strong bodies, flowing, drained their force.
But either's force was matched till Yniol's cry,
'Remember that great insult done the Queen,'
Increased Geraint's, who heaved his blade aloft,
And cracked the helmet through, and bit the bone,
And felled him, and set foot upon his breast,
And said, 'Thy name?' To whom the fallen man
Made answer, groaning, 'Edyrn, son of Nudd!
Ashamed am I that I should tell it thee.
My pride is broken: men have seen my fall.'
'Then, Edyrn, son of Nudd,' replied Geraint,
'These two things shalt thou do, or else thou diest.
First, thou thyself, with damsel and with dwarf,
Shalt ride to Arthur's court, and coming there,
Crave pardon for that insult done the Queen,
And shalt abide her judgment on it; next,
Thou shalt give back their earldom to thy kin.
These two things shalt thou do, or thou shalt die.'
And Edyrn answered, 'These things will I do,
For I have never yet been overthrown,
And thou hast overthrown me, and my pride
Is broken down, for Enid sees my fall!'
And rising up, he rode to Arthur's court,
And there the Queen forgave him easily.
And being young, he changed and came to loathe
His crime of traitor, slowly drew himself
Bright from his old dark life, and fell at last
In the great battle fighting for the King.

But when the third day from the hunting-morn
Made a low splendour in the world, and wings
Moved in her ivy, Enid, for she lay
With her fair head in the dim-yellow light,
Among the dancing shadows of the birds,
Woke and bethought her of her promise given
No later than last eve to Prince Geraint--
So bent he seemed on going the third day,
He would not leave her, till her promise given--
To ride with him this morning to the court,
And there be made known to the stately Queen,
And there be wedded with all ceremony.
At this she cast her eyes upon her dress,
And thought it never yet had looked so mean.
For as a leaf in mid-November is

To what it is in mid-October, seemed
The dress that now she looked on to the dress
She looked on ere the coming of Geraint.
And still she looked, and still the terror grew
Of that strange bright and dreadful thing, a court,
All staring at her in her faded silk:
And softly to her own sweet heart she said:

'This noble prince who won our earldom back,
So splendid in his acts and his attire,
Sweet heaven, how much I shall discredit him!
Would he could tarry with us here awhile,
But being so beholden to the Prince,
It were but little grace in any of us,
Bent as he seemed on going this third day,
To seek a second favour at his hands.
Yet if he could but tarry a day or two,
Myself would work eye dim, and finger lame,
Far liefer than so much discredit him.'

And Enid fell in longing for a dress
All branched and flowered with gold, a costly gift
Of her good mother, given her on the night
Before her birthday, three sad years ago,
That night of fire, when Edayrn sacked their house,
And scattered all they had to all the winds:
For while the mother showed it, and the two
Were turning and admiring it, the work
To both appeared so costly, rose a cry
That Edayrn's men were on them, and they fled
With little save the jewels they had on,
Which being sold and sold had bought them bread:
And Edayrn's men had caught them in their flight,
And placed them in this ruin; and she wished
The Prince had found her in her ancient home;
Then let her fancy flit across the past,
And roam the goodly places that she knew;
And last bethought her how she used to watch,
Near that old home, a pool of golden carp;
And one was patched and blurred and lustreless
Among his burnished brethren of the pool;
And half asleep she made comparison
Of that and these to her own faded self
And the gay court, and fell asleep again;
And dreamt herself was such a faded form
Among her burnished sisters of the pool;

But this was in the garden of a king;
And though she lay dark in the pool, she knew
That all was bright; that all about were birds
Of sunny plume in gilded trellis-work;
That all the turf was rich in plots that looked
Each like a garnet or a turkis in it;
And lords and ladies of the high court went
In silver tissue talking things of state;
And children of the King in cloth of gold
Glanced at the doors or gamboled down the walks;
And while she thought 'They will not see me,' came
A stately queen whose name was Guinevere,
And all the children in their cloth of gold
Ran to her, crying, 'If we have fish at all
Let them be gold; and charge the gardeners now
To pick the faded creature from the pool,
And cast it on the mixen that it die.'
And therewithal one came and seized on her,
And Enid started waking, with her heart
All overshadowed by the foolish dream,
And lo! it was her mother grasping her
To get her well awake; and in her hand
A suit of bright apparel, which she laid
Flat on the couch, and spoke exultingly:

'See here, my child, how fresh the colours look,
How fast they hold like colours of a shell
That keeps the wear and polish of the wave.
Why not? It never yet was worn, I trow:
Look on it, child, and tell me if ye know it.'

And Enid looked, but all confused at first,
Could scarce divide it from her foolish dream:
Then suddenly she knew it and rejoiced,
And answered, 'Yea, I know it; your good gift,
So sadly lost on that unhappy night;
Your own good gift!' 'Yea, surely,' said the dame,
'And gladly given again this happy morn.
For when the jousts were ended yesterday,
Went Yniol through the town, and everywhere
He found the sack and plunder of our house
All scattered through the houses of the town;
And gave command that all which once was ours
Should now be ours again: and yester-eve,
While ye were talking sweetly with your Prince,
Came one with this and laid it in my hand,

For love or fear, or seeking favour of us,
Because we have our earldom back again.
And yester-eve I would not tell you of it,
But kept it for a sweet surprise at morn.
Yea, truly is it not a sweet surprise?
For I myself unwillingly have worn
My faded suit, as you, my child, have yours,
And howsoever patient, Yniol his.
Ah, dear, he took me from a goodly house,
With store of rich apparel, sumptuous fare,
And page, and maid, and squire, and seneschal,
And pastime both of hawk and hound, and all
That appertains to noble maintenance.
Yea, and he brought me to a goodly house;
But since our fortune swerved from sun to shade,
And all through that young traitor, cruel need
Constrained us, but a better time has come;
So clothe yourself in this, that better fits
Our mended fortunes and a Prince's bride:
For though ye won the prize of fairest fair,
And though I heard him call you fairest fair,
Let never maiden think, however fair,
She is not fairer in new clothes than old.
And should some great court-lady say, the Prince
Hath picked a ragged-robin from the hedge,
And like a madman brought her to the court,
Then were ye shamed, and, worse, might shame the Prince
To whom we are beholden; but I know,
That when my dear child is set forth at her best,
That neither court nor country, though they sought
Through all the provinces like those of old
That lighted on Queen Esther, has her match.'

Here ceased the kindly mother out of breath;
And Enid listened brightening as she lay;
Then, as the white and glittering star of morn
Parts from a bank of snow, and by and by
Slips into golden cloud, the maiden rose,
And left her maiden couch, and robed herself,
Helped by the mother's careful hand and eye,
Without a mirror, in the gorgeous gown;
Who, after, turned her daughter round, and said,
She never yet had seen her half so fair;
And called her like that maiden in the tale,
Whom Gwydion made by glamour out of flowers
And sweeter than the bride of Cassivelaun,

Flur, for whose love the Roman Csar first
Invaded Britain, 'But we beat him back,
As this great Prince invaded us, and we,
Not beat him back, but welcomed him with joy
And I can scarcely ride with you to court,
For old am I, and rough the ways and wild;
But Yniol goes, and I full oft shall dream
I see my princess as I see her now,
Clothed with my gift, and gay among the gay.'

But while the women thus rejoiced, Geraint
Woke where he slept in the high hall, and called
For Enid, and when Yniol made report
Of that good mother making Enid gay
In such apparel as might well beseem
His princess, or indeed the stately Queen,
He answered: 'Earl, entreat her by my love,
Albeit I give no reason but my wish,
That she ride with me in her faded silk.'
Yniol with that hard message went; it fell
Like flaws in summer laying lusty corn:
For Enid, all abashed she knew not why,
Dared not to glance at her good mother's face,
But silently, in all obedience,
Her mother silent too, nor helping her,
Laid from her limbs the costly-broidered gift,
And robed them in her ancient suit again,
And so descended. Never man rejoiced
More than Geraint to greet her thus attired;
And glancing all at once as keenly at her
As careful robins eye the delver's toil,
Made her cheek burn and either eyelid fall,
But rested with her sweet face satisfied;
Then seeing cloud upon the mother's brow,
Her by both hands she caught, and sweetly said,

'O my new mother, be not wroth or grieved
At thy new son, for my petition to her.
When late I left Caerleon, our great Queen,
In words whose echo lasts, they were so sweet,
Made promise, that whatever bride I brought,
Herself would clothe her like the sun in Heaven.
Thereafter, when I reached this ruined hall,
Beholding one so bright in dark estate,
I vowed that could I gain her, our fair Queen,
No hand but hers, should make your Enid burst

Sunlike from cloud--and likewise thought perhaps,
That service done so graciously would bind
The two together; fain I would the two
Should love each other: how can Enid find
A nobler friend? Another thought was mine;
I came among you here so suddenly,
That though her gentle presence at the lists
Might well have served for proof that I was loved,
I doubted whether daughter's tenderness,
Or easy nature, might not let itself
Be moulded by your wishes for her weal;
Or whether some false sense in her own self
Of my contrasting brightness, overbore
Her fancy dwelling in this dusky hall;
And such a sense might make her long for court
And all its perilous glories: and I thought,
That could I somehow prove such force in her
Linked with such love for me, that at a word
(No reason given her) she could cast aside
A splendour dear to women, new to her,
And therefore dearer; or if not so new,
Yet therefore tenfold dearer by the power
Of intermitted usage; then I felt
That I could rest, a rock in ebbs and flows,
Fixt on her faith. Now, therefore, I do rest,
A prophet certain of my prophecy,
That never shadow of mistrust can cross
Between us. Grant me pardon for my thoughts:
And for my strange petition I will make
Amends hereafter by some gaudy-day,
When your fair child shall wear your costly gift
Beside your own warm hearth, with, on her knees,
Who knows? another gift of the high God,
Which, maybe, shall have learned to lisp you thanks.'

He spoke: the mother smiled, but half in tears,
Then brought a mantle down and wrapt her in it,
And claspt and kissed her, and they rode away.

Now thrice that morning Guinevere had climbed
The giant tower, from whose high crest, they say,
Men saw the goodly hills of Somerset,
And white sails flying on the yellow sea;
But not to goodly hill or yellow sea
Looked the fair Queen, but up the vale of Usk,
By the flat meadow, till she saw them come;

And then descending met them at the gates,
Embraced her with all welcome as a friend,
And did her honour as the Prince's bride,
And clothed her for her bridals like the sun;
And all that week was old Caerleon gay,
For by the hands of Dubric, the high saint,
They twain were wedded with all ceremony.

And this was on the last year's Whitsuntide.
But Enid ever kept the faded silk,
Remembering how first he came on her,
Drest in that dress, and how he loved her in it,
And all her foolish fears about the dress,
And all his journey toward her, as himself
Had told her, and their coming to the court.

And now this morning when he said to her,
'Put on your worst and meanest dress,' she found
And took it, and arrayed herself therein.

Geraint and Enid

O purblind race of miserable men,
How many among us at this very hour
Do forge a life-long trouble for ourselves,
By taking true for false, or false for true;
Here, through the feeble twilight of this world
Groping, how many, until we pass and reach
That other, where we see as we are seen!

So fared it with Geraint, who issuing forth
That morning, when they both had got to horse,
Perhaps because he loved her passionately,
And felt that tempest brooding round his heart,
Which, if he spoke at all, would break perforce
Upon a head so dear in thunder, said:
'Not at my side. I charge thee ride before,
Ever a good way on before; and this
I charge thee, on thy duty as a wife,

Whatever happens, not to speak to me,
No, not a word!' and Enid was aghast;
And forth they rode, but scarce three paces on,
When crying out, 'Effeminate as I am,
I will not fight my way with gilded arms,
All shall be iron;' he loosed a mighty purse,
Hung at his belt, and hurled it toward the squire.
So the last sight that Enid had of home
Was all the marble threshold flashing, strown
With gold and scattered coinage, and the squire
Chafing his shoulder: then he cried again,
'To the wilds!' and Enid leading down the tracks
Through which he had her lead him on, they past
The marches, and by bandit-haunted holds,
Gray swamps and pools, waste places of the fern,
And wildernesses, perilous paths, they rode:
Round was their pace at first, but slackened soon:
A stranger meeting them had surely thought
They rode so slowly and they looked so pale,
That each had suffered some exceeding wrong.
For he was ever saying to himself,
'O I that wasted time to tend upon her,
To compass her with sweet observances,
To dress her beautifully and keep her true'--
And there he broke the sentence in his heart
Abruptly, as a man upon his tongue
May break it, when his passion masters him.
And she was ever praying the sweet heavens
To save her dear lord whole from any wound.
And ever in her mind she cast about
For that unnoticed failing in herself,
Which made him look so cloudy and so cold;
Till the great plover's human whistle amazed
Her heart, and glancing round the waste she feared
In ever wavering brake an ambuscade.
Then thought again, 'If there be such in me,
I might amend it by the grace of Heaven,
If he would only speak and tell me of it.'

But when the fourth part of the day was gone,
Then Enid was aware of three tall knights
On horseback, wholly armed, behind a rock
In shadow, waiting for them, caitiffs all;
And heard one crying to his fellow, 'Look,
Here comes a laggard hanging down his head,
Who seems no bolder than a beaten hound;

Come, we will slay him and will have his horse
And armour, and his damsel shall be ours.'

Then Enid pondered in her heart, and said:
'I will go back a little to my lord,
And I will tell him all their caitiff talk;
For, be he wroth even to slaying me,
Far liefer by his dear hand had I die,
Than that my lord should suffer loss or shame.'

Then she went back some paces of return,
Met his full frown timidly firm, and said;
'My lord, I saw three bandits by the rock
Waiting to fall on you, and heard them boast
That they would slay you, and possess your horse
And armour, and your damsel should be theirs.'

He made a wrathful answer: 'Did I wish
Your warning or your silence? one command
I laid upon you, not to speak to me,
And thus ye keep it! Well then, look--for now,
Whether ye wish me victory or defeat,
Long for my life, or hunger for my death,
Yourself shall see my vigour is not lost.'

Then Enid waited pale and sorrowful,
And down upon him bare the bandit three.
And at the midmost charging, Prince Geraint
Drove the long spear a cubit through his breast
And out beyond; and then against his brace
Of comrades, each of whom had broken on him
A lance that splintered like an icicle,
Swung from his brand a windy buffet out
Once, twice, to right, to left, and stunned the twain
Or slew them, and dismounting like a man
That skins the wild beast after slaying him,
Stript from the three dead wolves of woman born
The three gay suits of armour which they wore,
And let the bodies lie, but bound the suits
Of armour on their horses, each on each,
And tied the bridle-reins of all the three
Together, and said to her, 'Drive them on
Before you;' and she drove them through the waste.

He followed nearer; ruth began to work
Against his anger in him, while he watched

The being he loved best in all the world,
With difficulty in mild obedience
Driving them on: he fain had spoken to her,
And loosed in words of sudden fire the wrath
And smouldered wrong that burnt him all within;
But evermore it seemed an easier thing
At once without remorse to strike her dead,
Than to cry 'Halt,' and to her own bright face
Accuse her of the least immodesty:
And thus tongue-tied, it made him wroth the more
That she COULD speak whom his own ear had heard
Call herself false: and suffering thus he made
Minutes an age: but in scarce longer time
Than at Caerleon the full-tided Usk,
Before he turn to fall seaward again,
Pauses, did Enid, keeping watch, behold
In the first shallow shade of a deep wood,
Before a gloom of stubborn-shafted oaks,
Three other horsemen waiting, wholly armed,
Whereof one seemed far larger than her lord,
And shook her pulses, crying, 'Look, a prize!
Three horses and three goodly suits of arms,
And all in charge of whom? a girl: set on.'
'Nay,' said the second, 'yonder comes a knight.'
The third, 'A craven; how he hangs his head.'
The giant answered merrily, 'Yea, but one?
Wait here, and when he passes fall upon him.'

And Enid pondered in her heart and said,
'I will abide the coming of my lord,
And I will tell him all their villainy.
My lord is weary with the fight before,
And they will fall upon him unawares.
I needs must disobey him for his good;
How should I dare obey him to his harm?
Needs must I speak, and though he kill me for it,
I save a life dearer to me than mine.'

And she abode his coming, and said to him
With timid firmness, 'Have I leave to speak?'
He said, 'Ye take it, speaking,' and she spoke.

'There lurk three villains yonder in the wood,
And each of them is wholly armed, and one
Is larger-limbed than you are, and they say
That they will fall upon you while ye pass.'

To which he flung a wrathful answer back:
'And if there were an hundred in the wood,
And every man were larger-limbed than I,
And all at once should sally out upon me,
I swear it would not ruffle me so much
As you that not obey me. Stand aside,
And if I fall, cleave to the better man.'

And Enid stood aside to wait the event,
Not dare to watch the combat, only breathe
Short fits of prayer, at every stroke a breath.
And he, she dreaded most, bare down upon him.
Aimed at the helm, his lance erred; but Geraint's,
A little in the late encounter strained,
Struck through the bulky bandit's corselet home,
And then brake short, and down his enemy rolled,
And there lay still; as he that tells the tale
Saw once a great piece of a promontory,
That had a sapling growing on it, slide
From the long shore-cliff's windy walls to the beach,
And there lie still, and yet the sapling grew:
So lay the man transfixt. His craven pair
Of comrades making slower at the Prince,
When now they saw their bulwark fallen, stood;
On whom the victor, to confound them more,
Spurred with his terrible war-cry; for as one,
That listens near a torrent mountain-brook,
All through the crash of the near cataract hears
The drumming thunder of the huger fall
At distance, were the soldiers wont to hear
His voice in battle, and be kindled by it,
And foemen scared, like that false pair who turned
Flying, but, overtaken, died the death
Themselves had wrought on many an innocent.

Thereon Geraint, dismounting, picked the lance
That pleased him best, and drew from those dead wolves
Their three gay suits of armour, each from each,
And bound them on their horses, each on each,
And tied the bridle-reins of all the three
Together, and said to her, 'Drive them on
Before you,' and she drove them through the wood.

He followed nearer still: the pain she had
To keep them in the wild ways of the wood,

Two sets of three laden with jingling arms,
Together, served a little to disedge
The sharpness of that pain about her heart:
And they themselves, like creatures gently born
But into bad hands fallen, and now so long
By bandits groomed, pricked their light ears, and felt
Her low firm voice and tender government.

So through the green gloom of the wood they past,
And issuing under open heavens beheld
A little town with towers, upon a rock,
And close beneath, a meadow gemlike chased
In the brown wild, and mowers mowing in it:
And down a rocky pathway from the place
There came a fair-haired youth, that in his hand
Bare victual for the mowers: and Geraint
Had ruth again on Enid looking pale:
Then, moving downward to the meadow ground,
He, when the fair-haired youth came by him, said,
'Friend, let her eat; the damsel is so faint.'
'Yea, willingly,' replied the youth; 'and thou,
My lord, eat also, though the fare is coarse,
And only meet for mowers;' then set down
His basket, and dismounting on the sward
They let the horses graze, and ate themselves.
And Enid took a little delicately,
Less having stomach for it than desire
To close with her lord's pleasure; but Geraint
Ate all the mowers' victual unawares,
And when he found all empty, was amazed;
And 'Boy,' said he, 'I have eaten all, but take
A horse and arms for guerdon; choose the best.'
He, reddening in extremity of delight,
'My lord, you overpay me fifty-fold.'
'Ye will be all the wealthier,' cried the Prince.
'I take it as free gift, then,' said the boy,
'Not guerdon; for myself can easily,
While your good damsel rests, return, and fetch
Fresh victual for these mowers of our Earl;
For these are his, and all the field is his,
And I myself am his; and I will tell him
How great a man thou art: he loves to know
When men of mark are in his territory:
And he will have thee to his palace here,
And serve thee costlier than with mowers' fare.'

Then said Geraint, 'I wish no better fare:
I never ate with angrier appetite
Than when I left your mowers dinnerless.
And into no Earl's palace will I go.
I know, God knows, too much of palaces!
And if he want me, let him come to me.
But hire us some fair chamber for the night,
And stalling for the horses, and return
With victual for these men, and let us know.'

'Yea, my kind lord,' said the glad youth, and went,
Held his head high, and thought himself a knight,
And up the rocky pathway disappeared,
Leading the horse, and they were left alone.

But when the Prince had brought his errant eyes
Home from the rock, sideways he let them glance
At Enid, where she droopt: his own false doom,
That shadow of mistrust should never cross
Betwixt them, came upon him, and he sighed;
Then with another humorous ruth remarked
The lusty mowers labouring dinnerless,
And watched the sun blaze on the turning scythe,
And after nodded sleepily in the heat.
But she, remembering her old ruined hall,
And all the windy clamour of the daws
About her hollow turret, plucked the grass
There growing longest by the meadow's edge,
And into many a listless annulet,
Now over, now beneath her marriage ring,
Wove and unwove it, till the boy returned
And told them of a chamber, and they went;
Where, after saying to her, 'If ye will,
Call for the woman of the house,' to which
She answered, 'Thanks, my lord;' the two remained
Apart by all the chamber's width, and mute
As two creatures voiceless through the fault of birth,
Or two wild men supporters of a shield,
Painted, who stare at open space, nor glance
The one at other, parted by the shield.

On a sudden, many a voice along the street,
And heel against the pavement echoing, burst
Their drowse; and either started while the door,
Pushed from without, drave backward to the wall,
And midmost of a rout of roisterers,

Femininely fair and dissolutely pale,
Her suitor in old years before Geraint,
Entered, the wild lord of the place, Limours.
He moving up with pliant courtliness,
Greeted Geraint full face, but stealthily,
In the mid-warmth of welcome and graspt hand,
Found Enid with the corner of his eye,
And knew her sitting sad and solitary.
Then cried Geraint for wine and goodly cheer
To feed the sudden guest, and sumptuously
According to his fashion, bad the host
Call in what men soever were his friends,
And feast with these in honour of their Earl;
'And care not for the cost; the cost is mine.'

And wine and food were brought, and Earl Limours
Drank till he jested with all ease, and told
Free tales, and took the word and played upon it,
And made it of two colours; for his talk,
When wine and free companions kindled him,
Was wont to glance and sparkle like a gem
Of fifty facets; thus he moved the Prince
To laughter and his comrades to applause.
Then, when the Prince was merry, asked Limours,
'Your leave, my lord, to cross the room, and speak
To your good damsel there who sits apart,
And seems so lonely?' 'My free leave,' he said;
'Get her to speak: she doth not speak to me.'
Then rose Limours, and looking at his feet,
Like him who tries the bridge he fears may fail,
Crost and came near, lifted adoring eyes,
Bowed at her side and uttered whisperingly:

'Enid, the pilot star of my lone life,
Enid, my early and my only love,
Enid, the loss of whom hath turned me wild--
What chance is this? how is it I see you here?
Ye are in my power at last, are in my power.
Yet fear me not: I call mine own self wild,
But keep a touch of sweet civility
Here in the heart of waste and wilderness.
I thought, but that your father came between,
In former days you saw me favourably.
And if it were so do not keep it back:
Make me a little happier: let me know it:
Owe you me nothing for a life half-lost?

Yea, yea, the whole dear debt of all you are.
And, Enid, you and he, I see with joy,
Ye sit apart, you do not speak to him,
You come with no attendance, page or maid,
To serve you--doth he love you as of old?
For, call it lovers' quarrels, yet I know
Though men may bicker with the things they love,
They would not make them laughable in all eyes,
Not while they loved them; and your wretched dress,
A wretched insult on you, dumbly speaks
Your story, that this man loves you no more.
Your beauty is no beauty to him now:
A common chance--right well I know it--palled--
For I know men: nor will ye win him back,
For the man's love once gone never returns.
But here is one who loves you as of old;
With more exceeding passion than of old:
Good, speak the word: my followers ring him round:
He sits unarmed; I hold a finger up;
They understand: nay; I do not mean blood:
Nor need ye look so scared at what I say:
My malice is no deeper than a moat,
No stronger than a wall: there is the keep;
He shall not cross us more; speak but the word:
Or speak it not; but then by Him that made me
The one true lover whom you ever owned,
I will make use of all the power I have.
O pardon me! the madness of that hour,
When first I parted from thee, moves me yet.'

At this the tender sound of his own voice
And sweet self-pity, or the fancy of it,
Made his eye moist; but Enid feared his eyes,
Moist as they were, wine-heated from the feast;
And answered with such craft as women use,
Guilty or guiltless, to stave off a chance
That breaks upon them perilously, and said:

'Earl, if you love me as in former years,
And do not practise on me, come with morn,
And snatch me from him as by violence;
Leave me tonight: I am weary to the death.'

Low at leave-taking, with his brandished plume
Brushing his instep, bowed the all-amorous Earl,
And the stout Prince bad him a loud good-night.

He moving homeward babbled to his men,
How Enid never loved a man but him,
Nor cared a broken egg-shell for her lord.

But Enid left alone with Prince Geraint,
Debating his command of silence given,
And that she now perforce must violate it,
Held commune with herself, and while she held
He fell asleep, and Enid had no heart
To wake him, but hung o'er him, wholly pleased
To find him yet unwounded after fight,
And hear him breathing low and equally.
Anon she rose, and stepping lightly, heaped
The pieces of his armour in one place,
All to be there against a sudden need;
Then dozed awhile herself, but overtoiled
By that day's grief and travel, evermore
Seemed catching at a rootless thorn, and then
Went slipping down horrible precipices,
And strongly striking out her limbs awoke;
Then thought she heard the wild Earl at the door,
With all his rout of random followers,
Sound on a dreadful trumpet, summoning her;
Which was the red cock shouting to the light,
As the gray dawn stole o'er the dewy world,
And glimmered on his armour in the room.
And once again she rose to look at it,
But touched it unawares: jangling, the casque
Fell, and he started up and stared at her.
Then breaking his command of silence given,
She told him all that Earl Limours had said,
Except the passage that he loved her not;
Nor left untold the craft herself had used;
But ended with apology so sweet,
Low-spoken, and of so few words, and seemed
So justified by that necessity,
That though he thought 'was it for him she wept
In Devon?' he but gave a wrathful groan,
Saying, 'Your sweet faces make good fellows fools
And traitors. Call the host and bid him bring
Charger and palfrey.' So she glided out
Among the heavy breathings of the house,
And like a household Spirit at the walls
Beat, till she woke the sleepers, and returned:
Then tending her rough lord, though all unasked,
In silence, did him service as a squire;

Till issuing armed he found the host and cried,
'Thy reckoning, friend?' and ere he learnt it, 'Take
Five horses and their armours;' and the host
Suddenly honest, answered in amaze,
'My lord, I scarce have spent the worth of one!'
'Ye will be all the wealthier,' said the Prince,
And then to Enid, 'Forward! and today
I charge you, Enid, more especially,
What thing soever ye may hear, or see,
Or fancy (though I count it of small use
To charge you) that ye speak not but obey.'

And Enid answered, 'Yea, my lord, I know
Your wish, and would obey; but riding first,
I hear the violent threats you do not hear,
I see the danger which you cannot see:
Then not to give you warning, that seems hard;
Almost beyond me: yet I would obey.'

'Yea so,' said he, 'do it: be not too wise;
Seeing that ye are wedded to a man,
Not all mismated with a yawning clown,
But one with arms to guard his head and yours,
With eyes to find you out however far,
And ears to hear you even in his dreams.'

With that he turned and looked as keenly at her
As careful robins eye the delver's toil;
And that within her, which a wanton fool,
Or hasty judger would have called her guilt,
Made her cheek burn and either eyelid fall.
And Geraint looked and was not satisfied.

Then forward by a way which, beaten broad,
Led from the territory of false Limours
To the waste earldom of another earl,
Doorm, whom his shaking vassals called the Bull,
Went Enid with her sullen follower on.
Once she looked back, and when she saw him ride
More near by many a rood than yestermorn,
It wellnigh made her cheerful; till Geraint
Waving an angry hand as who should say
'Ye watch me,' saddened all her heart again.
But while the sun yet beat a dewy blade,
The sound of many a heavily-galloping hoof
Smote on her ear, and turning round she saw

Dust, and the points of lances bicker in it.
Then not to disobey her lord's behest,
And yet to give him warning, for he rode
As if he heard not, moving back she held
Her finger up, and pointed to the dust.
At which the warrior in his obstinacy,
Because she kept the letter of his word,
Was in a manner pleased, and turning, stood.
And in the moment after, wild Limours,
Borne on a black horse, like a thunder-cloud
Whose skirts are loosened by the breaking storm,
Half ridden off with by the thing he rode,
And all in passion uttering a dry shriek,
Dashed down on Geraint, who closed with him, and bore
Down by the length of lance and arm beyond
The crupper, and so left him stunned or dead,
And overthrew the next that followed him,
And blindly rushed on all the rout behind.
But at the flash and motion of the man
They vanished panic-stricken, like a shoal
Of darting fish, that on a summer morn
Adown the crystal dykes at Camelot
Come slipping o'er their shadows on the sand,
But if a man who stands upon the brink
But lift a shining hand against the sun,
There is not left the twinkle of a fin
Betwixt the cressy islets white in flower;
So, scared but at the motion of the man,
Fled all the boon companions of the Earl,
And left him lying in the public way;
So vanish friendships only made in wine.

Then like a stormy sunlight smiled Geraint,
Who saw the chargers of the two that fell
Start from their fallen lords, and wildly fly,
Mixt with the flyers. 'Horse and man,' he said,
'All of one mind and all right-honest friends!
Not a hoof left: and I methinks till now
Was honest--paid with horses and with arms;
I cannot steal or plunder, no nor beg:
And so what say ye, shall we strip him there
Your lover? has your palfrey heart enough
To bear his armour? shall we fast, or dine?
No?--then do thou, being right honest, pray
That we may meet the horsemen of Earl Doorm,
I too would still be honest.' Thus he said:

And sadly gazing on her bridle-reins,
And answering not one word, she led the way.

But as a man to whom a dreadful loss
Falls in a far land and he knows it not,
But coming back he learns it, and the loss
So pains him that he sickens nigh to death;
So fared it with Geraint, who being pricked
In combat with the follower of Limours,
Bled underneath his armour secretly,
And so rode on, nor told his gentle wife
What ailed him, hardly knowing it himself,
Till his eye darkened and his helmet wagged;
And at a sudden swerving of the road,
Though happily down on a bank of grass,
The Prince, without a word, from his horse fell.

And Enid heard the clashing of his fall,
Suddenly came, and at his side all pale
Dismounting, loosed the fastenings of his arms,
Nor let her true hand falter, nor blue eye
Moisten, till she had lighted on his wound,
And tearing off her veil of faded silk
Had bared her forehead to the blistering sun,
And swathed the hurt that drained her dear lord's life.
Then after all was done that hand could do,
She rested, and her desolation came
Upon her, and she wept beside the way.

And many past, but none regarded her,
For in that realm of lawless turbulence,
A woman weeping for her murdered mate
Was cared as much for as a summer shower:
One took him for a victim of Earl Doorm,
Nor dared to waste a perilous pity on him:
Another hurrying past, a man-at-arms,
Rode on a mission to the bandit Earl;
Half whistling and half singing a coarse song,
He drove the dust against her veiless eyes:
Another, flying from the wrath of Doorm
Before an ever-fancied arrow, made
The long way smoke beneath him in his fear;
At which her palfrey whinnying lifted heel,
And scoured into the coppices and was lost,
While the great charger stood, grieved like a man.

But at the point of noon the huge Earl Doorm,
Broad-faced with under-fringe of russet beard,
Bound on a foray, rolling eyes of prey,
Came riding with a hundred lances up;
But ere he came, like one that hails a ship,
Cried out with a big voice, 'What, is he dead?'
'No, no, not dead!' she answered in all haste.
'Would some of your people take him up,
And bear him hence out of this cruel sun?
Most sure am I, quite sure, he is not dead.'

Then said Earl Doorm: 'Well, if he be not dead,
Why wail ye for him thus? ye seem a child.
And be he dead, I count you for a fool;
Your wailing will not quicken him: dead or not,
Ye mar a comely face with idiot tears.
Yet, since the face IS comely--some of you,
Here, take him up, and bear him to our hall:
An if he live, we will have him of our band;
And if he die, why earth has earth enough
To hide him. See ye take the charger too,
A noble one.'

He spake, and past away,
But left two brawny spearmen, who advanced,
Each growling like a dog, when his good bone
Seems to be plucked at by the village boys
Who love to vex him eating, and he fears
To lose his bone, and lays his foot upon it,
Gnawing and growling: so the ruffians growled,
Fearing to lose, and all for a dead man,
Their chance of booty from the morning's raid,
Yet raised and laid him on a litter-bier,
Such as they brought upon their forays out
For those that might be wounded; laid him on it
All in the hollow of his shield, and took
And bore him to the naked hall of Doorm,
(His gentle charger following him unled)
And cast him and the bier in which he lay
Down on an oaken settle in the hall,
And then departed, hot in haste to join
Their luckier mates, but growling as before,
And cursing their lost time, and the dead man,
And their own Earl, and their own souls, and her.
They might as well have blest her: she was deaf
To blessing or to cursing save from one.

So for long hours sat Enid by her lord,
There in the naked hall, propping his head,
And chafing his pale hands, and calling to him.
Till at the last he wakened from his swoon,
And found his own dear bride propping his head,
And chafing his faint hands, and calling to him;
And felt the warm tears falling on his face;
And said to his own heart, 'She weeps for me:'
And yet lay still, and feigned himself as dead,
That he might prove her to the uttermost,
And say to his own heart, 'She weeps for me.'

But in the falling afternoon returned
The huge Earl Doorm with plunder to the hall.
His lusty spearmen followed him with noise:
Each hurling down a heap of things that rang
Against his pavement, cast his lance aside,
And doffed his helm: and then there fluttered in,
Half-bold, half-frighted, with dilated eyes,
A tribe of women, dressed in many hues,
And mingled with the spearmen: and Earl Doorm
Struck with a knife's haft hard against the board,
And called for flesh and wine to feed his spears.
And men brought in whole hogs and quarter beeves,
And all the hall was dim with steam of flesh:
And none spake word, but all sat down at once,
And ate with tumult in the naked hall,
Feeding like horses when you hear them feed;
Till Enid shrank far back into herself,
To shun the wild ways of the lawless tribe.
But when Earl Doorm had eaten all he would,
He rolled his eyes about the hall, and found
A damsel drooping in a corner of it.
Then he remembered her, and how she wept;
And out of her there came a power upon him;
And rising on the sudden he said, 'Eat!
I never yet beheld a thing so pale.
God's curse, it makes me mad to see you weep.
Eat! Look yourself. Good luck had your good man,
For were I dead who is it would weep for me?
Sweet lady, never since I first drew breath
Have I beheld a lily like yourself.
And so there lived some colour in your cheek,
There is not one among my gentlewomen
Were fit to wear your slipper for a glove.
But listen to me, and by me be ruled,

And I will do the thing I have not done,
For ye shall share my earldom with me, girl,
And we will live like two birds in one nest,
And I will fetch you forage from all fields,
For I compel all creatures to my will.'

He spoke: the brawny spearman let his cheek
Bulge with the unswallowed piece, and turning stared;
While some, whose souls the old serpent long had drawn
Down, as the worm draws in the withered leaf
And makes it earth, hissed each at other's ear
What shall not be recorded--women they,
Women, or what had been those gracious things,
But now desired the humbling of their best,
Yea, would have helped him to it: and all at once
They hated her, who took no thought of them,
But answered in low voice, her meek head yet
Drooping, 'I pray you of your courtesy,
He being as he is, to let me be.'

She spake so low he hardly heard her speak,
But like a mighty patron, satisfied
With what himself had done so graciously,
Assumed that she had thanked him, adding, 'Yea,
Eat and be glad, for I account you mine.'

She answered meekly, 'How should I be glad
Henceforth in all the world at anything,
Until my lord arise and look upon me?'

Here the huge Earl cried out upon her talk,
As all but empty heart and weariness
And sickly nothing; suddenly seized on her,
And bare her by main violence to the board,
And thrust the dish before her, crying, 'Eat.'

'No, no,' said Enid, vext, 'I will not eat
Till yonder man upon the bier arise,
And eat with me.' 'Drink, then,' he answered. 'Here!'
(And filled a horn with wine and held it to her,)
'Lo! I, myself, when flushed with fight, or hot,
God's curse, with anger--often I myself,
Before I well have drunken, scarce can eat:
Drink therefore and the wine will change thy will.'

'Not so,' she cried, 'by Heaven, I will not drink

Till my dear lord arise and bid me do it,
And drink with me; and if he rise no more,
I will not look at wine until I die.'

At this he turned all red and paced his hall,
Now gnawed his under, now his upper lip,
And coming up close to her, said at last:
'Girl, for I see ye scorn my courtesies,
Take warning: yonder man is surely dead;
And I compel all creatures to my will.
Not eat nor drink? And wherefore wail for one,
Who put your beauty to this flout and scorn
By dressing it in rags? Amazed am I,
Beholding how ye butt against my wish,
That I forbear you thus: cross me no more.
At least put off to please me this poor gown,
This silken rag, this beggar-woman's weed:
I love that beauty should go beautifully:
For see ye not my gentlewomen here,
How gay, how suited to the house of one
Who loves that beauty should go beautifully?
Rise therefore; robe yourself in this: obey.'

He spoke, and one among his gentlewomen
Displayed a splendid silk of foreign loom,
Where like a shoaling sea the lovely blue
Played into green, and thicker down the front
With jewels than the sward with drops of dew,
When all night long a cloud clings to the hill,
And with the dawn ascending lets the day
Strike where it clung: so thickly shone the gems.

But Enid answered, harder to be moved
Than hardest tyrants in their day of power,
With life-long injuries burning unavenged,
And now their hour has come; and Enid said:

'In this poor gown my dear lord found me first,
And loved me serving in my father's hall:
In this poor gown I rode with him to court,
And there the Queen arrayed me like the sun:
In this poor gown he bad me clothe myself,
When now we rode upon this fatal quest
Of honour, where no honour can be gained:
And this poor gown I will not cast aside
Until himself arise a living man,

And bid me cast it. I have griefs enough:
Pray you be gentle, pray you let me be:
I never loved, can never love but him:
Yea, God, I pray you of your gentleness,
He being as he is, to let me be.'

Then strode the brute Earl up and down his hall,
And took his russet beard between his teeth;
Last, coming up quite close, and in his mood
Crying, 'I count it of no more avail,
Dame, to be gentle than ungentle with you;
Take my salute,' unknightly with flat hand,
However lightly, smote her on the cheek.

Then Enid, in her utter helplessness,
And since she thought, 'He had not dared to do it,
Except he surely knew my lord was dead,'
Sent forth a sudden sharp and bitter cry,
As of a wild thing taken in the trap,
Which sees the trapper coming through the wood.

This heard Geraint, and grasping at his sword,
(It lay beside him in the hollow shield),
Made but a single bound, and with a sweep of it
Shore through the swarthy neck, and like a ball
The russet-bearded head rolled on the floor.
So died Earl Doorm by him he counted dead.
And all the men and women in the hall
Rose when they saw the dead man rise, and fled
Yelling as from a spectre, and the two
Were left alone together, and he said:

'Enid, I have used you worse than that dead man;
Done you more wrong: we both have undergone
That trouble which has left me thrice your own:
Henceforward I will rather die than doubt.
And here I lay this penance on myself,
Not, though mine own ears heard you yesternorn--
You thought me sleeping, but I heard you say,
I heard you say, that you were no true wife:
I swear I will not ask your meaning in it:
I do believe yourself against yourself,
And will henceforward rather die than doubt.'

And Enid could not say one tender word,
She felt so blunt and stupid at the heart:

She only prayed him, 'Fly, they will return
And slay you; fly, your charger is without,
My palfrey lost.' 'Then, Enid, shall you ride
Behind me.' 'Yea,' said Enid, 'let us go.'
And moving out they found the stately horse,
Who now no more a vassal to the thief,
But free to stretch his limbs in lawful fight,
Neighed with all gladness as they came, and stooped
With a low whinny toward the pair: and she
Kissed the white star upon his noble front,
Glad also; then Geraint upon the horse
Mounted, and reached a hand, and on his foot
She set her own and climbed; he turned his face
And kissed her climbing, and she cast her arms
About him, and at once they rode away.

And never yet, since high in Paradise
O'er the four rivers the first roses blew,
Came purer pleasure unto mortal kind
Than lived through her, who in that perilous hour
Put hand to hand beneath her husband's heart,
And felt him hers again: she did not weep,
But o'er her meek eyes came a happy mist
Like that which kept the heart of Eden green
Before the useful trouble of the rain:
Yet not so misty were her meek blue eyes
As not to see before them on the path,
Right in the gateway of the bandit hold,
A knight of Arthur's court, who laid his lance
In rest, and made as if to fall upon him.
Then, fearing for his hurt and loss of blood,
She, with her mind all full of what had chanced,
Shrieked to the stranger 'Slay not a dead man!'
'The voice of Enid,' said the knight; but she,
Beholding it was Edyrn son of Nudd,
Was moved so much the more, and shrieked again,
'O cousin, slay not him who gave you life.'
And Edyrn moving frankly forward spake:
'My lord Geraint, I greet you with all love;
I took you for a bandit knight of Doorm;
And fear not, Enid, I should fall upon him,
Who love you, Prince, with something of the love
Wherewith we love the Heaven that chastens us.
For once, when I was up so high in pride
That I was halfway down the slope to Hell,
By overthrowing me you threw me higher.

Now, made a knight of Arthur's Table Round,
And since I knew this Earl, when I myself
Was half a bandit in my lawless hour,
I come the mouthpiece of our King to Doorm
(The King is close behind me) bidding him
Disband himself, and scatter all his powers,
Submit, and hear the judgment of the King.'

'He hears the judgment of the King of kings,'
Cried the wan Prince; 'and lo, the powers of Doorm
Are scattered,' and he pointed to the field,
Where, huddled here and there on mound and knoll,
Were men and women staring and aghast,
While some yet fled; and then he plainlier told
How the huge Earl lay slain within his hall.
But when the knight besought him, 'Follow me,
Prince, to the camp, and in the King's own ear
Speak what has chanced; ye surely have endured
Strange chances here alone;' that other flushed,
And hung his head, and halted in reply,
Fearing the mild face of the blameless King,
And after madness acted question asked:
Till Edyrn crying, 'If ye will not go
To Arthur, then will Arthur come to you,'
'Enough,' he said, 'I follow,' and they went.
But Enid in their going had two fears,
One from the bandit scattered in the field,
And one from Edyrn. Every now and then,
When Edyrn reined his charger at her side,
She shrank a little. In a hollow land,
From which old fires have broken, men may fear
Fresh fire and ruin. He, perceiving, said:

'Fair and dear cousin, you that most had cause
To fear me, fear no longer, I am changed.
Yourself were first the blameless cause to make
My nature's prideful sparkle in the blood
Break into furious flame; being repulsed
By Yniol and yourself, I schemed and wrought
Until I overturned him; then set up
(With one main purpose ever at my heart)
My haughty jousts, and took a paramour;
Did her mock-honour as the fairest fair,
And, toppling over all antagonism,
So waxed in pride, that I believed myself
Unconquerable, for I was wellnigh mad:

And, but for my main purpose in these jousts,
I should have slain your father, seized yourself.
I lived in hope that sometime you would come
To these my lists with him whom best you loved;
And there, poor cousin, with your meek blue eyes
The truest eyes that ever answered Heaven,
Behold me overturn and trample on him.
Then, had you cried, or knelt, or prayed to me,
I should not less have killed him. And so you came,--
But once you came,--and with your own true eyes
Beheld the man you loved (I speak as one
Speaks of a service done him) overthrow
My proud self, and my purpose three years old,
And set his foot upon me, and give me life.
There was I broken down; there was I saved:
Though thence I rode all-shamed, hating the life
He gave me, meaning to be rid of it.
And all the penance the Queen laid upon me
Was but to rest awhile within her court;
Where first as sullen as a beast new-caged,
And waiting to be treated like a wolf,
Because I knew my deeds were known, I found,
Instead of scornful pity or pure scorn,
Such fine reserve and noble reticence,
Manners so kind, yet stately, such a grace
Of tenderest courtesy, that I began
To glance behind me at my former life,
And find that it had been the wolf's indeed:
And oft I talked with Dubric, the high saint,
Who, with mild heat of holy oratory,
Subdued me somewhat to that gentleness,
Which, when it weds with manhood, makes a man.
And you were often there about the Queen,
But saw me not, or marked not if you saw;
Nor did I care or dare to speak with you,
But kept myself aloof till I was changed;
And fear not, cousin; I am changed indeed.'

He spoke, and Enid easily believed,
Like simple noble natures, credulous
Of what they long for, good in friend or foe,
There most in those who most have done them ill.
And when they reached the camp the King himself
Advanced to greet them, and beholding her
Though pale, yet happy, asked her not a word,
But went apart with Edyrn, whom he held

In converse for a little, and returned,
And, gravely smiling, lifted her from horse,
And kissed her with all pureness, brother-like,
And showed an empty tent allotted her,
And glancing for a minute, till he saw her
Pass into it, turned to the Prince, and said:

'Prince, when of late ye prayed me for my leave
To move to your own land, and there defend
Your marches, I was pricked with some reproof,
As one that let foul wrong stagnate and be,
By having looked too much through alien eyes,
And wrought too long with delegated hands,
Not used mine own: but now behold me come
To cleanse this common sewer of all my realm,
With Edyrn and with others: have ye looked
At Edyrn? have ye seen how nobly changed?
This work of his is great and wonderful.
His very face with change of heart is changed.
The world will not believe a man repents:
And this wise world of ours is mainly right.
Full seldom doth a man repent, or use
Both grace and will to pick the vicious quitch
Of blood and custom wholly out of him,
And make all clean, and plant himself afresh.
Edyrn has done it, weeding all his heart
As I will weed this land before I go.
I, therefore, made him of our Table Round,
Not rashly, but have proved him everyway
One of our noblest, our most valorous,
Sanest and most obedient: and indeed
This work of Edyrn wrought upon himself
After a life of violence, seems to me
A thousand-fold more great and wonderful
Than if some knight of mine, risking his life,
My subject with my subjects under him,
Should make an onslaught single on a realm
Of robbers, though he slew them one by one,
And were himself nigh wounded to the death.'

So spake the King; low bowed the Prince, and felt
His work was neither great nor wonderful,
And past to Enid's tent; and thither came
The King's own leech to look into his hurt;
And Enid tended on him there; and there
Her constant motion round him, and the breath

Of her sweet tendance hovering over him,
Filled all the genial courses of his blood
With deeper and with ever deeper love,
As the south-west that blowing Bala lake
Fills all the sacred Dee. So past the days.

But while Geraint lay healing of his hurt,
The blameless King went forth and cast his eyes
On each of all whom Uther left in charge
Long since, to guard the justice of the King:
He looked and found them wanting; and as now
Men weed the white horse on the Berkshire hills
To keep him bright and clean as heretofore,
He rooted out the slothful officer
Or guilty, which for bribe had winked at wrong,
And in their chairs set up a stronger race
With hearts and hands, and sent a thousand men
To till the wastes, and moving everywhere
Cleared the dark places and let in the law,
And broke the bandit holds and cleansed the land.

Then, when Geraint was whole again, they past
With Arthur to Caerleon upon Usk.
There the great Queen once more embraced her friend,
And clothed her in apparel like the day.
And though Geraint could never take again
That comfort from their converse which he took
Before the Queen's fair name was breathed upon,
He rested well content that all was well.
Thence after tarrying for a space they rode,
And fifty knights rode with them to the shores
Of Severn, and they past to their own land.
And there he kept the justice of the King
So vigorously yet mildly, that all hearts
Applauded, and the spiteful whisper died:
And being ever foremost in the chase,
And victor at the tilt and tournament,
They called him the great Prince and man of men.
But Enid, whom her ladies loved to call
Enid the Fair, a grateful people named
Enid the Good; and in their halls arose
The cry of children, Enids and Geraints
Of times to be; nor did he doubt her more,
But rested in her faith, till he crowned
A happy life with a fair death, and fell
Against the heathen of the Northern Sea

In battle, fighting for the blameless King.

Balin and Balan

Pellam the King, who held and lost with Lot
In that first war, and had his realm restored
But rendered tributary, failed of late
To send his tribute; wherefore Arthur called
His treasurer, one of many years, and spake,
'Go thou with him and him and bring it to us,
Lest we should set one truer on his throne.
Man's word is God in man.'

His Baron said

'We go but harken: there be two strange knights

Who sit near Camelot at a fountain-side,
A mile beneath the forest, challenging
And overthrowing every knight who comes.
Wilt thou I undertake them as we pass,
And send them to thee?'

Arthur laughed upon him.

'Old friend, too old to be so young, depart,
Delay not thou for aught, but let them sit,
Until they find a lustier than themselves.'

So these departed. Early, one fair dawn,
The light-winged spirit of his youth returned
On Arthur's heart; he armed himself and went,
So coming to the fountain-side beheld
Balin and Balan sitting statuelike,
Brethren, to right and left the spring, that down,
From underneath a plume of lady-fern,
Sang, and the sand danced at the bottom of it.
And on the right of Balin Balin's horse
Was fast beside an alder, on the left
Of Balan Balan's near a poplartree.
'Fair Sirs,' said Arthur, 'wherefore sit ye here?'
Balin and Balan answered 'For the sake

Of glory; we be mightier men than all
In Arthur's court; that also have we proved;
For whatsoever knight against us came
Or I or he have easily overthrown.'
'I too,' said Arthur, 'am of Arthur's hall,
But rather proven in his Paynim wars
Than famous jousts; but see, or proven or not,
Whether me likewise ye can overthrow.'
And Arthur lightly smote the brethren down,
And lightly so returned, and no man knew.

Then Balin rose, and Balan, and beside
The carolling water set themselves again,
And spake no word until the shadow turned;
When from the fringe of coppice round them burst
A spangled pursuivant, and crying 'Sirs,
Rise, follow! ye be sent for by the King,'
They followed; whom when Arthur seeing asked
'Tell me your names; why sat ye by the well?'
Balin the stillness of a minute broke
Saying 'An unmelodious name to thee,
Balin, "the Savage"--that addition thine--
My brother and my better, this man here,
Balan. I smote upon the naked skull
A thrall of thine in open hall, my hand
Was gauntleted, half slew him; for I heard
He had spoken evil of me; thy just wrath
Sent me a three-years' exile from thine eyes.
I have not lived my life delightsomely:
For I that did that violence to thy thrall,
Had often wrought some fury on myself,
Saving for Balan: those three kingless years
Have past--were wormwood-bitter to me. King,
Methought that if we sat beside the well,
And hurled to ground what knight soever spurred
Against us, thou would'st take me gladlier back,
And make, as ten-times worthier to be thine
Than twenty Balins, Balan knight. I have said.
Not so--not all. A man of thine today
Abashed us both, and brake my boast. Thy will?'
Said Arthur 'Thou hast ever spoken truth;
Thy too fierce manhood would not let thee lie.
Rise, my true knight. As children learn, be thou
Wiser for falling! walk with me, and move
To music with thine Order and the King.
Thy chair, a grief to all the brethren, stands

Vacant, but thou retake it, mine again!'

Thereafter, when Sir Balin entered hall,
The Lost one Found was greeted as in Heaven
With joy that blazed itself in woodland wealth
Of leaf, and gayest garlandage of flowers,
Along the walls and down the board; they sat,
And cup clashed cup; they drank and some one sang,
Sweet-voiced, a song of welcome, whereupon
Their common shout in chorus, mounting, made
Those banners of twelve battles overhead
Stir, as they stirred of old, when Arthur's host
Proclaimed him Victor, and the day was won.

Then Balin added to their Order lived
A wealthier life than heretofore with these
And Balin, till their embassy returned.

'Sir King' they brought report 'we hardly found,
So bushed about it is with gloom, the hall
Of him to whom ye sent us, Pellam, once
A Christless foe of thine as ever dashed
Horse against horse; but seeing that thy realm
Hath prospered in the name of Christ, the King
Took, as in rival heat, to holy things;
And finds himself descended from the Saint
Arimathan Joseph; him who first
Brought the great faith to Britain over seas;
He boasts his life as purer than thine own;
Eats scarce enow to keep his pulse abeat;
Hath pushed aside his faithful wife, nor lets
Or dame or damsel enter at his gates
Lest he should be polluted. This gray King
Showed us a shrine wherein were wonders--yea--
Rich arks with priceless bones of martyrdom,
Thorns of the crown and shivers of the cross,
And therewithal (for thus he told us) brought
By holy Joseph thither, that same spear
Wherewith the Roman pierced the side of Christ.
He much amazed us; after, when we sought
The tribute, answered "I have quite foregone
All matters of this world: Garlon, mine heir,
Of him demand it," which this Garlon gave
With much ado, railing at thine and thee.

'But when we left, in those deep woods we found

A knight of thine spear-stricken from behind,
Dead, whom we buried; more than one of us
Cried out on Garlon, but a woodman there
Reported of some demon in the woods
Was once a man, who driven by evil tongues
From all his fellows, lived alone, and came
To learn black magic, and to hate his kind
With such a hate, that when he died, his soul
Became a Fiend, which, as the man in life
Was wounded by blind tongues he saw not whence,
Strikes from behind. This woodman showed the cave
From which he sallies, and wherein he dwelt.
We saw the hoof-print of a horse, no more.'

Then Arthur, 'Let who goes before me, see
He do not fall behind me: foully slain
And villainously! who will hunt for me
This demon of the woods?' Said Balin, 'I!
So claimed the quest and rode away, but first,
Embracing Balin, 'Good my brother, hear!
Let not thy moods prevail, when I am gone
Who used to lay them! hold them outer fiends,
Who leap at thee to tear thee; shake them aside,
Dreams ruling when wit sleeps! yea, but to dream
That any of these would wrong thee, wrongs thyself.
Witness their flowery welcome. Bound are they
To speak no evil. Truly save for fears,
My fears for thee, so rich a fellowship
Would make me wholly blest: thou one of them,
Be one indeed: consider them, and all
Their bearing in their common bond of love,
No more of hatred than in Heaven itself,
No more of jealousy than in Paradise.'

So Balin warned, and went; Balin remained:
Who--for but three brief moons had glanced away
From being knighted till he smote the thrall,
And faded from the presence into years
Of exile--now would strictlier set himself
To learn what Arthur meant by courtesy,
Manhood, and knighthood; wherefore hovered round
Lancelot, but when he marked his high sweet smile
In passing, and a transitory word
Make knight or churl or child or damsel seem
From being smiled at happier in themselves--
Sighed, as a boy lame-born beneath a height,

That glooms his valley, sighs to see the peak
Sun-flushed, or touch at night the northern star;
For one from out his village lately climed
And brought report of azure lands and fair,
Far seen to left and right; and he himself
Hath hardly scaled with help a hundred feet
Up from the base: so Balin marvelling oft
How far beyond him Lancelot seemed to move,
Groaned, and at times would mutter, 'These be gifts,
Born with the blood, not learnable, divine,
Beyond MY reach. Well had I foughten--well--
In those fierce wars, struck hard--and had I crowned
With my slain self the heaps of whom I slew--
So--better!--But this worship of the Queen,
That honour too wherein she holds him--this,
This was the sunshine that hath given the man
A growth, a name that branches o'er the rest,
And strength against all odds, and what the King
So prizes--overprizes--gentleness.
Her likewise would I worship an I might.
I never can be close with her, as he
That brought her hither. Shall I pray the King
To let me bear some token of his Queen
Whereon to gaze, remembering her--forget
My heats and violences? live afresh?
What, if the Queen disdained to grant it! nay
Being so stately-gentle, would she make
My darkness blackness? and with how sweet grace
She greeted my return! Bold will I be--
Some goodly cognizance of Guinevere,
In lieu of this rough beast upon my shield,
Langued gules, and toothed with grinning savagery.'

And Arthur, when Sir Balin sought him, said
'What wilt thou bear?' Balin was bold, and asked
To bear her own crown-royal upon shield,
Whereat she smiled and turned her to the King,
Who answered 'Thou shalt put the crown to use.
The crown is but the shadow of the King,
And this a shadow's shadow, let him have it,
So this will help him of his violences!'
'No shadow' said Sir Balin 'O my Queen,
But light to me! no shadow, O my King,
But golden earnest of a gentler life!'

So Balin bare the crown, and all the knights

Approved him, and the Queen, and all the world
Made music, and he felt his being move
In music with his Order, and the King.

The nightingale, full-toned in middle May,
Hath ever and anon a note so thin
It seems another voice in other groves;
Thus, after some quick burst of sudden wrath,
The music in him seemed to change, and grow
Faint and far-off.

And once he saw the thrall
His passion half had gauntleted to death,
That causer of his banishment and shame,
Smile at him, as he deemed, presumptuously:
His arm half rose to strike again, but fell:
The memory of that cognizance on shield
Weighted it down, but in himself he moaned:

'Too high this mount of Camelot for me:
These high-set courtesies are not for me.
Shall I not rather prove the worse for these?
Fierier and stormier from restraining, break
Into some madness even before the Queen?'

Thus, as a hearth lit in a mountain home,
And glancing on the window, when the gloom
Of twilight deepens round it, seems a flame
That rages in the woodland far below,
So when his moods were darkened, court and King
And all the kindly warmth of Arthur's hall
Shadowed an angry distance: yet he strove
To learn the graces of their Table, fought
Hard with himself, and seemed at length in peace.

Then chanced, one morning, that Sir Balin sat
Close-bowered in that garden nigh the hall.
A walk of roses ran from door to door;
A walk of lilies crost it to the bower:
And down that range of roses the great Queen
Came with slow steps, the morning on her face;
And all in shadow from the counter door
Sir Lancelot as to meet her, then at once,
As if he saw not, glanced aside, and paced
The long white walk of lilies toward the bower.
Followed the Queen; Sir Balin heard her 'Prince,
Art thou so little loyal to thy Queen,

As pass without good morrow to thy Queen?'
To whom Sir Lancelot with his eyes on earth,
'Fain would I still be loyal to the Queen.'
'Yea so' she said 'but so to pass me by--
So loyal scarce is loyal to thyself,
Whom all men rate the king of courtesy.
Let be: ye stand, fair lord, as in a dream.'

Then Lancelot with his hand among the flowers
'Yea--for a dream. Last night methought I saw
That maiden Saint who stands with lily in hand
In yonder shrine. All round her prest the dark,
And all the light upon her silver face
Flowed from the spiritual lily that she held.
Lo! these her emblems drew mine eyes--away:
For see, how perfect-pure! As light a flush
As hardly tints the blossom of the quince
Would mar their charm of stainless maidenhood.'

'Sweeter to me' she said 'this garden rose
Deep-hued and many-folded! sweeter still
The wild-wood hyacinth and the bloom of May.
Prince, we have ridden before among the flowers
In those fair days--not all as cool as these,
Though season-earlier. Art thou sad? or sick?
Our noble King will send thee his own leech--
Sick? or for any matter angered at me?'

Then Lancelot lifted his large eyes; they dwelt
Deep-tranced on hers, and could not fall: her hue
Changed at his gaze: so turning side by side
They past, and Balin started from his bower.

'Queen? subject? but I see not what I see.
Damsel and lover? hear not what I hear.
My father hath begotten me in his wrath.
I suffer from the things before me, know,
Learn nothing; am not worthy to be knight;
A churl, a clown!' and in him gloom on gloom
Deepened: he sharply caught his lance and shield,
Nor stayed to crave permission of the King,
But, mad for strange adventure, dashed away.

He took the selfsame track as Balin, saw
The fountain where they sat together, sighed
'Was I not better there with him?' and rode

The skyless woods, but under open blue
Came on the hoarhead woodman at a bough
Wearily hewing. 'Churl, thine axe!' he cried,
Descended, and disjointed it at a blow:
To whom the woodman uttered wonderingly
'Lord, thou couldst lay the Devil of these woods
If arm of flesh could lay him.' Balin cried
'Him, or the viler devil who plays his part,
To lay that devil would lay the Devil in me.'
'Nay' said the churl, 'our devil is a truth,
I saw the flash of him but yestereven.
And some DO say that our Sir Garlon too
Hath learned black magic, and to ride unseen.
Look to the cave.' But Balin answered him
'Old fabler, these be fancies of the churl,
Look to thy woodcraft,' and so leaving him,
Now with slack rein and careless of himself,
Now with dug spur and raving at himself,
Now with droopt brow down the long glades he rode;
So marked not on his right a cavern-chasm
Yawn over darkness, where, nor far within,
The whole day died, but, dying, gleamed on rocks
Roof-pendent, sharp; and others from the floor,
Tusklike, arising, made that mouth of night
Whereout the Demon issued up from Hell.
He marked not this, but blind and deaf to all
Save that chained rage, which ever yelpt within,
Past eastward from the falling sun. At once
He felt the hollow-beaten mosses thud
And tremble, and then the shadow of a spear,
Shot from behind him, ran along the ground.
Sideways he started from the path, and saw,
With pointed lance as if to pierce, a shape,
A light of armour by him flash, and pass
And vanish in the woods; and followed this,
But all so blind in rage that unawares
He burst his lance against a forest bough,
Dishorsed himself, and rose again, and fled
Far, till the castle of a King, the hall
Of Pellam, lichen-bearded, grayly draped
With streaming grass, appeared, low-built but strong;
The ruinous donjon as a knoll of moss,
The battlement overtopped with ivytods,
A home of bats, in every tower an owl.
Then spake the men of Pellam crying 'Lord,
Why wear ye this crown-royal upon shield?'

Said Balin 'For the fairest and the best
Of ladies living gave me this to bear.'
So stalled his horse, and strode across the court,
But found the greetings both of knight and King
Faint in the low dark hall of banquet: leaves
Laid their green faces flat against the panes,
Sprays grated, and the cankered boughs without
Whined in the wood; for all was hushed within,
Till when at feast Sir Garlon likewise asked
'Why wear ye that crown-royal?' Balin said
'The Queen we worship, Lancelot, I, and all,
As fairest, best and purest, granted me
To bear it!' Such a sound (for Arthur's knights
Were hated strangers in the hall) as makes
The white swan-mother, sitting, when she hears
A strange knee rustle through her secret reeds,
Made Garlon, hissing; then he sourly smiled.
'Fairest I grant her: I have seen; but best,
Best, purest? THOU from Arthur's hall, and yet
So simple! hast thou eyes, or if, are these
So far besotted that they fail to see
This fair wife-worship cloaks a secret shame?
Truly, ye men of Arthur be but babes.'

A goblet on the board by Balin, bossed
With holy Joseph's legend, on his right
Stood, all of massiest bronze: one side had sea
And ship and sail and angels blowing on it:
And one was rough with wattling, and the walls
Of that low church he built at Glastonbury.
This Balin graspt, but while in act to hurl,
Through memory of that token on the shield
Relaxed his hold: 'I will be gentle' he thought
'And passing gentle' caught his hand away,
Then fiercely to Sir Garlon 'Eyes have I
That saw today the shadow of a spear,
Shot from behind me, run along the ground;
Eyes too that long have watched how Lancelot draws
From homage to the best and purest, might,
Name, manhood, and a grace, but scanty thine,
Who, sitting in thine own hall, canst endure
To mouth so huge a foulness--to thy guest,
Me, me of Arthur's Table. Felon talk!
Let be! no more!'

But not the less by night
The scorn of Garlon, poisoning all his rest,

Stung him in dreams. At length, and dim through leaves
Blinkt the white morn, sprays grated, and old boughs
Whined in the wood. He rose, descended, met
The scorner in the castle court, and fain,
For hate and loathing, would have past him by;
But when Sir Garlon uttered mocking-wise;
'What, wear ye still that same crown-scandalous?'
His countenance blackened, and his forehead veins
Bloated, and branched; and tearing out of sheath
The brand, Sir Balin with a fiery 'Ha!
So thou be shadow, here I make thee ghost,'
Hard upon helm smote him, and the blade flew
Splintering in six, and clinkt upon the stones.
Then Garlon, reeling slowly backward, fell,
And Balin by the banneret of his helm
Dragged him, and struck, but from the castle a cry
Sounded across the court, and--men-at-arms,
A score with pointed lances, making at him--
He dashed the pummel at the foremost face,
Beneath a low door dipt, and made his feet
Wings through a glimmering gallery, till he marked
The portal of King Pellam's chapel wide
And inward to the wall; he stept behind;
Thence in a moment heard them pass like wolves
Howling; but while he stared about the shrine,
In which he scarce could spy the Christ for Saints,
Beheld before a golden altar lie
The longest lance his eyes had ever seen,
Point-painted red; and seizing thereupon
Pushed through an open casement down, leaned on it,
Leapt in a semicircle, and lit on earth;
Then hand at ear, and harkening from what side
The blindfold rummage buried in the walls
Might echo, ran the counter path, and found
His charger, mounted on him and away.
An arrow whizzed to the right, one to the left,
One overhead; and Pellam's feeble cry
'Stay, stay him! he defileth heavenly things
With earthly uses'--made him quickly dive
Beneath the boughs, and race through many a mile
Of dense and open, till his goodly horse,
Arising wearily at a fallen oak,
Stumbled headlong, and cast him face to ground.

Half-wroth he had not ended, but all glad,
Knightlike, to find his charger yet unlamed,

Sir Balin drew the shield from off his neck,
Stared at the priceless cognizance, and thought
'I have shamed thee so that now thou shamest me,
Thee will I bear no more,' high on a branch
Hung it, and turned aside into the woods,
And there in gloom cast himself all along,
Moaning 'My violences, my violences!'

But now the wholesome music of the wood
Was dumb'd by one from out the hall of Mark,
A damsel-errant, warbling, as she rode
The woodland alleys, Vivien, with her Squire.

'The fire of Heaven has killed the barren cold,
And kindled all the plain and all the wold.
The new leaf ever pushes off the old.
The fire of Heaven is not the flame of Hell.

'Old priest, who mumble worship in your quire--
Old monk and nun, ye scorn the world's desire,
Yet in your frosty cells ye feel the fire!
The fire of Heaven is not the flame of Hell.

'The fire of Heaven is on the dusty ways.
The wayside blossoms open to the blaze.
The whole wood-world is one full peal of praise.
The fire of Heaven is not the flame of Hell.

'The fire of Heaven is lord of all things good,
And starve not thou this fire within thy blood,
But follow Vivien through the fiery flood!
The fire of Heaven is not the flame of Hell!'

Then turning to her Squire 'This fire of Heaven,
This old sun-worship, boy, will rise again,
And beat the cross to earth, and break the King
And all his Table.'

Then they reached a glade,
Where under one long lane of cloudless air
Before another wood, the royal crown
Sparkled, and swaying upon a restless elm
Drew the vague glance of Vivien, and her Squire;
Amazed were these; 'Lo there' she cried--'a crown--
Borne by some high lord-prince of Arthur's hall,
And there a horse! the rider? where is he?
See, yonder lies one dead within the wood.

Not dead; he stirs!--but sleeping. I will speak.
Hail, royal knight, we break on thy sweet rest,
Not, doubtless, all unearned by noble deeds.
But bounden art thou, if from Arthur's hall,
To help the weak. Behold, I fly from shame,
A lustful King, who sought to win my love
Through evil ways: the knight, with whom I rode,
Hath suffered misadventure, and my squire
Hath in him small defence; but thou, Sir Prince,
Wilt surely guide me to the warrior King,
Arthur the blameless, pure as any maid,
To get me shelter for my maidenhood.
I charge thee by that crown upon thy shield,
And by the great Queen's name, arise and hence.'

And Balin rose, 'Thither no more! nor Prince
Nor knight am I, but one that hath defamed
The cognizance she gave me: here I dwell
Savage among the savage woods, here die--
Die: let the wolves' black maws ensepulchre
Their brother beast, whose anger was his lord.
O me, that such a name as Guinevere's,
Which our high Lancelot hath so lifted up,
And been thereby uplifted, should through me,
My violence, and my villainy, come to shame.'

Thereat she suddenly laughed and shrill, anon
Sighed all as suddenly. Said Balin to her
'Is this thy courtesy--to mock me, ha?
Hence, for I will not with thee.' Again she sighed
'Pardon, sweet lord! we maidens often laugh
When sick at heart, when rather we should weep.
I knew thee wronged. I brake upon thy rest,
And now full loth am I to break thy dream,
But thou art man, and canst abide a truth,
Though bitter. Hither, boy--and mark me well.
Dost thou remember at Caerleon once--
A year ago--nay, then I love thee not--
Ay, thou rememberest well--one summer dawn--
By the great tower--Caerleon upon Usk--
Nay, truly we were hidden: this fair lord,
The flower of all their vestal knighthood, knelt
In amorous homage--knelt--what else?--O ay
Knelt, and drew down from out his night-black hair
And mumbled that white hand whose ringed caress
Had wandered from her own King's golden head,

And lost itself in darkness, till she cried--
I thought the great tower would crash down on both--
"Rise, my sweet King, and kiss me on the lips,
Thou art my King." This lad, whose lightest word
Is mere white truth in simple nakedness,
Saw them embrace: he reddens, cannot speak,
So bashful, he! but all the maiden Saints,
The deathless mother-maidenhood of Heaven,
Cry out upon her. Up then, ride with me!
Talk not of shame! thou canst not, an thou would'st,
Do these more shame than these have done themselves.'

She lied with ease; but horror-stricken he,
Remembering that dark bower at Camelot,
Breathed in a dismal whisper 'It is truth.'

Sunnily she smiled 'And even in this lone wood,
Sweet lord, ye do right well to whisper this.
Fools prate, and perish traitors. Woods have tongues,
As walls have ears: but thou shalt go with me,
And we will speak at first exceeding low.
Meet is it the good King be not deceived.
See now, I set thee high on vantage ground,
From whence to watch the time, and eagle-like
Stoop at thy will on Lancelot and the Queen.'

She ceased; his evil spirit upon him leapt,
He ground his teeth together, sprang with a yell,
Tore from the branch, and cast on earth, the shield,
Drove his mailed heel athwart the royal crown,
Stamp'd all into defacement, hurled it from him
Among the forest weeds, and cursed the tale,
The told-of, and the teller.

That weird yell,
Unearthlier than all shriek of bird or beast,
Thrilled through the woods; and Balin lurking there
(His quest was unaccomplished) heard and thought
'The scream of that Wood-devil I came to quell!'
Then nearing 'Lo! he hath slain some brother-knight,
And tramples on the goodly shield to show
His loathing of our Order and the Queen.
My quest, meseems, is here. Or devil or man
Guard thou thine head.' Sir Balin spake not word,
But snatched a sudden buckler from the Squire,
And vaulted on his horse, and so they crashed
In onset, and King Pellam's holy spear,

Reputed to be red with sinless blood,
Redded at once with sinful, for the point
Across the maiden shield of Balin pricked
The hauberk to the flesh; and Balin's horse
Was wearied to the death, and, when they clashed,
Rolling back upon Balin, crushed the man
Inward, and either fell, and swooned away.

Then to her Squire muttered the damsel 'Fools!
This fellow hath wrought some foulness with his Queen:
Else never had he borne her crown, nor raved
And thus foamed over at a rival name:
But thou, Sir Chick, that scarce hast broken shell,
Art yet half-yolk, not even come to down--
Who never sawest Caerleon upon Usk--
And yet hast often pleaded for my love--
See what I see, be thou where I have been,
Or else Sir Chick--dismount and loose their casques
I fain would know what manner of men they be.'
And when the Squire had loosed them, 'Goodly!--look!
They might have cropt the myriad flower of May,
And butt each other here, like brainless bulls,
Dead for one heifer!

Then the gentle Squire
'I hold them happy, so they died for love:
And, Vivien, though ye beat me like your dog,
I too could die, as now I live, for thee.'

'Live on, Sir Boy,' she cried. 'I better prize
The living dog than the dead lion: away!
I cannot brook to gaze upon the dead.'
Then leapt her palfrey o'er the fallen oak,
And bounding forward 'Leave them to the wolves.'

But when their foreheads felt the cooling air,
Balin first woke, and seeing that true face,
Familiar up from cradle-time, so wan,
Crawled slowly with low moans to where he lay,
And on his dying brother cast himself
Dying; and HE lifted faint eyes; he felt
One near him; all at once they found the world,
Staring wild-wide; then with a childlike wail
And drawing down the dim disastrous brow
That o'er him hung, he kissed it, moaned and spake;

'O Balin, Balin, I that fain had died

To save thy life, have brought thee to thy death.
Why had ye not the shield I knew? and why
Trampled ye thus on that which bare the Crown?'

Then Balin told him brokenly, and in gasps,
All that had chanced, and Balan moaned again.

'Brother, I dwelt a day in Pellam's hall:
This Garlon mocked me, but I heeded not.
And one said "Eat in peace! a liar is he,
And hates thee for the tribute!" this good knight
Told me, that twice a wanton damsel came,
And sought for Garlon at the castle-gates,
Whom Pellam drove away with holy heat.
I well believe this damsel, and the one
Who stood beside thee even now, the same.
"She dwells among the woods" he said "and meets
And dallies with him in the Mouth of Hell."
Foul are their lives; foul are their lips; they lied.
Pure as our own true Mother is our Queen."

'O brother' answered Balin 'woe is me!
My madness all thy life has been thy doom,
Thy curse, and darkened all thy day; and now
The night has come. I scarce can see thee now.

Goodnight! for we shall never bid again
Goodmorrow--Dark my doom was here, and dark
It will be there. I see thee now no more.
I would not mine again should darken thine,
Goodnight, true brother.

Balan answered low

'Goodnight, true brother here! goodmorrow there!
We two were born together, and we die
Together by one doom:' and while he spoke
Closed his death-drowsing eyes, and slept the sleep
With Balin, either locked in either's arm.

Merlin and Vivien

A storm was coming, but the winds were still,
And in the wild woods of Broceliande,
Before an oak, so hollow, huge and old
It looked a tower of ivied masonwork,
At Merlin's feet the wily Vivien lay.

For he that always bare in bitter grudge
The slights of Arthur and his Table, Mark
The Cornish King, had heard a wandering voice,
A minstrel of Caerlon by strong storm
Blown into shelter at Tintagil, say
That out of naked knightlike purity
Sir Lancelot worshipt no unmarried girl
But the great Queen herself, fought in her name,
Swore by her--vows like theirs, that high in heaven
Love most, but neither marry, nor are given
In marriage, angels of our Lord's report.

He ceased, and then--for Vivien sweetly said
(She sat beside the banquet nearest Mark),
'And is the fair example followed, Sir,
In Arthur's household?'--answered innocently:

'Ay, by some few--ay, truly--youths that hold
It more beseems the perfect virgin knight
To worship woman as true wife beyond
All hopes of gaining, than as maiden girl.
They place their pride in Lancelot and the Queen.
So passionate for an utter purity
Beyond the limit of their bond, are these,
For Arthur bound them not to singleness.
Brave hearts and clean! and yet--God guide them--young.'

Then Mark was half in heart to hurl his cup
Straight at the speaker, but forbore: he rose
To leave the hall, and, Vivien following him,
Turned to her: 'Here are snakes within the grass;
And you methinks, O Vivien, save ye fear
The monkish manhood, and the mask of pure
Worn by this court, can stir them till they sting.'

And Vivien answered, smiling scornfully,
'Why fear? because that fostered at THY court
I savour of thy--virtues? fear them? no.
As Love, if Love is perfect, casts out fear,

So Hate, if Hate is perfect, casts out fear.
My father died in battle against the King,
My mother on his corpse in open field;
She bore me there, for born from death was I
Among the dead and sown upon the wind--
And then on thee! and shown the truth betimes,
That old true filth, and bottom of the well
Where Truth is hidden. Gracious lessons thine
And maxims of the mud! "This Arthur pure!
Great Nature through the flesh herself hath made
Gives him the lie! There is no being pure,
My cherub; saith not Holy Writ the same?"--
If I were Arthur, I would have thy blood.
Thy blessing, stainless King! I bring thee back,
When I have ferreted out their burrowings,
The hearts of all this Order in mine hand--
Ay--so that fate and craft and folly close,
Perchance, one curl of Arthur's golden beard.
To me this narrow grizzled fork of thine
Is cleaner-fashioned--Well, I loved thee first,
That warps the wit.'

Loud laughed the graceless Mark,
But Vivien, into Camelot stealing, lodged
Low in the city, and on a festal day
When Guinevere was crossing the great hall
Cast herself down, knelt to the Queen, and wailed.

'Why kneel ye there? What evil hath ye wrought?
Rise!' and the damsel bidden rise arose
And stood with folded hands and downward eyes
Of glancing corner, and all meekly said,
'None wrought, but suffered much, an orphan maid!
My father died in battle for thy King,
My mother on his corpse--in open field,
The sad sea-sounding wastes of Lyonesse--
Poor wretch--no friend!--and now by Mark the King
For that small charm of feature mine, pursued--
If any such be mine--I fly to thee.
Save, save me thou--Woman of women--thine
The wreath of beauty, thine the crown of power,
Be thine the balm of pity, O Heaven's own white
Earth-angel, stainless bride of stainless King--
Help, for he follows! take me to thyself!
O yield me shelter for mine innocence
Among thy maidens!

Here her slow sweet eyes
Fear-tremulous, but humbly hopeful, rose
Fixt on her hearer's, while the Queen who stood
All glittering like May sunshine on May leaves
In green and gold, and plumed with green replied,
'Peace, child! of overpraise and overblame
We choose the last. Our noble Arthur, him
Ye scarce can overpraise, will hear and know.
Nay--we believe all evil of thy Mark--
Well, we shall test thee farther; but this hour
We ride a-hawking with Sir Lancelot.
He hath given us a fair falcon which he trained;
We go to prove it. Bide ye here the while.'

She past; and Vivien murmured after 'Go!
I bide the while.' Then through the portal-arch
Peering askance, and muttering broken-wise,
As one that labours with an evil dream,
Beheld the Queen and Lancelot get to horse.

'Is that the Lancelot? goodly--ay, but gaunt:
Courteous--amends for gauntness--takes her hand--
That glance of theirs, but for the street, had been
A clinging kiss--how hand lingers in hand!
Let go at last!--they ride away--to hawk
For waterfowl. Royaller game is mine.
For such a supersensual sensual bond
As that gray cricket chirpt of at our hearth--
Touch flax with flame--a glance will serve--the liars!
Ah little rat that borest in the dyke
Thy hole by night to let the boundless deep
Down upon far-off cities while they dance--
Or dream--of thee they dreamed not--nor of me
These--ay, but each of either: ride, and dream
The mortal dream that never yet was mine--
Ride, ride and dream until ye wake--to me!
Then, narrow court and lubber King, farewell!
For Lancelot will be gracious to the rat,
And our wise Queen, if knowing that I know,
Will hate, loathe, fear--but honour me the more.'

Yet while they rode together down the plain,
Their talk was all of training, terms of art,
Diet and seeling, jesses, leash and lure.
'She is too noble' he said 'to check at pies,

Nor will she rake: there is no baseness in her.'
Here when the Queen demanded as by chance
'Know ye the stranger woman?' 'Let her be,'
Said Lancelot and unhooded casting off
The goodly falcon free; she towered; her bells,
Tone under tone, shrilled; and they lifted up
Their eager faces, wondering at the strength,
Boldness and royal knighthood of the bird
Who pounced her quarry and slew it. Many a time
As once--of old--among the flowers--they rode.

But Vivien half-forgotten of the Queen
Among her damsels broidering sat, heard, watched
And whispered: through the peaceful court she crept
And whispered: then as Arthur in the highest
Leavened the world, so Vivien in the lowest,
Arriving at a time of golden rest,
And sowing one ill hint from ear to ear,
While all the heathen lay at Arthur's feet,
And no quest came, but all was joust and play,
Leavened his hall. They heard and let her be.

Thereafter as an enemy that has left
Death in the living waters, and withdrawn,
The wily Vivien stole from Arthur's court.

She hated all the knights, and heard in thought
Their lavish comment when her name was named.
For once, when Arthur walking all alone,
Vext at a rumour issued from herself
Of some corruption crept among his knights,
Had met her, Vivien, being greeted fair,
Would fain have wrought upon his cloudy mood
With reverent eyes mock-loyal, shaken voice,
And fluttered adoration, and at last
With dark sweet hints of some who prized him more
Than who should prize him most; at which the King
Had gazed upon her blankly and gone by:
But one had watched, and had not held his peace:
It made the laughter of an afternoon
That Vivien should attempt the blameless King.
And after that, she set herself to gain
Him, the most famous man of all those times,
Merlin, who knew the range of all their arts,
Had built the King his havens, ships, and halls,
Was also Bard, and knew the starry heavens;

The people called him Wizard; whom at first
She played about with slight and sprightly talk,
And vivid smiles, and faintly-venomed points
Of slander, glancing here and grazing there;
And yielding to his kindlier moods, the Seer
Would watch her at her petulance, and play,
Even when they seemed unloveable, and laugh
As those that watch a kitten; thus he grew
Tolerant of what he half disdained, and she,
Perceiving that she was but half disdained,
Began to break her sports with graver fits,
Turn red or pale, would often when they met
Sigh fully, or all-silent gaze upon him
With such a fixt devotion, that the old man,
Though doubtful, felt the flattery, and at times
Would flatter his own wish in age for love,
And half believe her true: for thus at times
He wavered; but that other clung to him,
Fixt in her will, and so the seasons went.

Then fell on Merlin a great melancholy;
He walked with dreams and darkness, and he found
A doom that ever poised itself to fall,
An ever-moaning battle in the mist,
World-war of dying flesh against the life,
Death in all life and lying in all love,
The meanest having power upon the highest,
And the high purpose broken by the worm.

So leaving Arthur's court he gained the beach;
There found a little boat, and stept into it;
And Vivien followed, but he marked her not.
She took the helm and he the sail; the boat
Drave with a sudden wind across the deeps,
And touching Breton sands, they disembarked.
And then she followed Merlin all the way,
Even to the wild woods of Broceliande.
For Merlin once had told her of a charm,
The which if any wrought on anyone
With woven paces and with waving arms,
The man so wrought on ever seemed to lie
Closed in the four walls of a hollow tower,
From which was no escape for evermore;
And none could find that man for evermore,
Nor could he see but him who wrought the charm
Coming and going, and he lay as dead

And lost to life and use and name and fame.
And Vivien ever sought to work the charm
Upon the great Enchanter of the Time,
As fancying that her glory would be great
According to his greatness whom she quenched.

There lay she all her length and kissed his feet,
As if in deepest reverence and in love.
A twist of gold was round her hair; a robe
Of samite without price, that more exprest
Than hid her, clung about her lissome limbs,
In colour like the satin-shining palm
On sallows in the windy gleams of March:
And while she kissed them, crying, 'Trample me,
Dear feet, that I have followed through the world,
And I will pay you worship; tread me down
And I will kiss you for it;' he was mute:
So dark a forethought rolled about his brain,
As on a dull day in an Ocean cave
The blind wave feeling round his long sea-hall
In silence: wherefore, when she lifted up
A face of sad appeal, and spake and said,
'O Merlin, do ye love me?' and again,
'O Merlin, do ye love me?' and once more,
'Great Master, do ye love me?' he was mute.
And lissome Vivien, holding by his heel,
Writhed toward him, slided up his knee and sat,
Behind his ankle twined her hollow feet
Together, curved an arm about his neck,
Clung like a snake; and letting her left hand
Droop from his mighty shoulder, as a leaf,
Made with her right a comb of pearl to part
The lists of such a board as youth gone out
Had left in ashes: then he spoke and said,
Not looking at her, 'Who are wise in love
Love most, say least,' and Vivien answered quick,
'I saw the little elf-god eyeless once
In Arthur's arras hall at Camelot:
But neither eyes nor tongue--O stupid child!
Yet you are wise who say it; let me think
Silence is wisdom: I am silent then,
And ask no kiss;' then adding all at once,
'And lo, I clothe myself with wisdom,' drew
The vast and shaggy mantle of his beard
Across her neck and bosom to her knee,
And called herself a gilded summer fly

Caught in a great old tyrant spider's web,
Who meant to eat her up in that wild wood
Without one word. So Vivien called herself,
But rather seemed a lovely baleful star
Veiled in gray vapour; till he sadly smiled:
'To what request for what strange boon,' he said,
'Are these your pretty tricks and fooleries,
O Vivien, the preamble? yet my thanks,
For these have broken up my melancholy.'

And Vivien answered smiling saucily,
'What, O my Master, have ye found your voice?
I bid the stranger welcome. Thanks at last!
But yesterday you never opened lip,
Except indeed to drink: no cup had we:
In mine own lady palms I culled the spring
That gathered trickling dropwise from the cleft,
And made a pretty cup of both my hands
And offered you it kneeling: then you drank
And knew no more, nor gave me one poor word;
O no more thanks than might a goat have given
With no more sign of reverence than a beard.
And when we halted at that other well,
And I was faint to swooning, and you lay
Foot-gilt with all the blossom-dust of those
Deep meadows we had traversed, did you know
That Vivien bathed your feet before her own?
And yet no thanks: and all through this wild wood
And all this morning when I fondled you:
Boon, ay, there was a boon, one not so strange--
How had I wronged you? surely ye are wise,
But such a silence is more wise than kind.'

And Merlin locked his hand in hers and said:
'O did ye never lie upon the shore,
And watch the curled white of the coming wave
Glassed in the slippery sand before it breaks?
Even such a wave, but not so pleasurable,
Dark in the glass of some presageful mood,
Had I for three days seen, ready to fall.
And then I rose and fled from Arthur's court
To break the mood. You followed me unasked;
And when I looked, and saw you following me still,
My mind involved yourself the nearest thing
In that mind-mist: for shall I tell you truth?
You seemed that wave about to break upon me

And sweep me from my hold upon the world,
My use and name and fame. Your pardon, child.
Your pretty sports have brightened all again.
And ask your boon, for boon I owe you thrice,
Once for wrong done you by confusion, next
For thanks it seems till now neglected, last
For these your dainty gambols: wherefore ask;
And take this boon so strange and not so strange.'

And Vivien answered smiling mournfully:
'O not so strange as my long asking it,
Not yet so strange as you yourself are strange,
Nor half so strange as that dark mood of yours.
I ever feared ye were not wholly mine;
And see, yourself have owned ye did me wrong.
The people call you prophet: let it be:
But not of those that can expound themselves.
Take Vivien for expounder; she will call
That three-days-long presageful gloom of yours
No presage, but the same mistrustful mood
That makes you seem less noble than yourself,
Whenever I have asked this very boon,
Now asked again: for see you not, dear love,
That such a mood as that, which lately gloomed
Your fancy when ye saw me following you,
Must make me fear still more you are not mine,
Must make me yearn still more to prove you mine,
And make me wish still more to learn this charm
Of woven paces and of waving hands,
As proof of trust. O Merlin, teach it me.
The charm so taught will charm us both to rest.
For, grant me some slight power upon your fate,
I, feeling that you felt me worthy trust,
Should rest and let you rest, knowing you mine.
And therefore be as great as ye are named,
Not muffled round with selfish reticence.
How hard you look and how denyingly!
O, if you think this wickedness in me,
That I should prove it on you unawares,
That makes me passing wrathful; then our bond
Had best be loosed for ever: but think or not,
By Heaven that hears I tell you the clean truth,
As clean as blood of babes, as white as milk:
O Merlin, may this earth, if ever I,
If these unwitty wandering wits of mine,
Even in the jumbled rubbish of a dream,

Have tript on such conjectural treachery--
May this hard earth cleave to the Nadir hell
Down, down, and close again, and nip me flat,
If I be such a traitress. Yield my boon,
Till which I scarce can yield you all I am;
And grant my re-reiterated wish,
The great proof of your love: because I think,
However wise, ye hardly know me yet.'

And Merlin loosed his hand from hers and said,
'I never was less wise, however wise,
Too curious Vivien, though you talk of trust,
Than when I told you first of such a charm.
Yea, if ye talk of trust I tell you this,
Too much I trusted when I told you that,
And stirred this vice in you which ruined man
Through woman the first hour; for howsoe'er
In children a great curiousness be well,
Who have to learn themselves and all the world,
In you, that are no child, for still I find
Your face is practised when I spell the lines,
I call it,--well, I will not call it vice:
But since you name yourself the summer fly,
I well could wish a cobweb for the gnat,
That settles, beaten back, and beaten back
Settles, till one could yield for weariness:
But since I will not yield to give you power
Upon my life and use and name and fame,
Why will ye never ask some other boon?
Yea, by God's rood, I trusted you too much.'

And Vivien, like the tenderest-hearted maid
That ever bided tryst at village stile,
Made answer, either eyelid wet with tears:
'Nay, Master, be not wrathful with your maid;
Caress her: let her feel herself forgiven
Who feels no heart to ask another boon.
I think ye hardly know the tender rhyme
Of "trust me not at all or all in all."
I heard the great Sir Lancelot sing it once,
And it shall answer for me. Listen to it.

"In Love, if Love be Love, if Love be ours,
Faith and unfaith can ne'er be equal powers:
Unfaith in aught is want of faith in all.

"It is the little rift within the lute,
That by and by will make the music mute,
And ever widening slowly silence all.

"The little rift within the lover's lute
Or little pitted speck in garnered fruit,
That rotting inward slowly moulders all.

"It is not worth the keeping: let it go:
But shall it? answer, darling, answer, no.
And trust me not at all or all in all."

O Master, do ye love my tender rhyme?'

And Merlin looked and half believed her true,
So tender was her voice, so fair her face,
So sweetly gleamed her eyes behind her tears
Like sunlight on the plain behind a shower:
And yet he answered half indignantly:

'Far other was the song that once I heard
By this huge oak, sung nearly where we sit:
For here we met, some ten or twelve of us,
To chase a creature that was current then
In these wild woods, the hart with golden horns.
It was the time when first the question rose
About the founding of a Table Round,
That was to be, for love of God and men
And noble deeds, the flower of all the world.
And each incited each to noble deeds.
And while we waited, one, the youngest of us,
We could not keep him silent, out he flashed,
And into such a song, such fire for fame,
Such trumpet-glowings in it, coming down
To such a stern and iron-clashing close,
That when he stopt we longed to hurl together,
And should have done it; but the beauteous beast
Scared by the noise upstarted at our feet,
And like a silver shadow slipt away
Through the dim land; and all day long we rode
Through the dim land against a rushing wind,
That glorious roundel echoing in our ears,
And chased the flashes of his golden horns
Till they vanished by the fairy well
That laughs at iron--as our warriors did--
Where children cast their pins and nails, and cry,

"Laugh, little well!" but touch it with a sword,
It buzzes fiercely round the point; and there
We lost him: such a noble song was that.
But, Vivien, when you sang me that sweet rhyme,
I felt as though you knew this cursd charm,
Were proving it on me, and that I lay
And felt them slowly ebbing, name and fame.'

And Vivien answered smiling mournfully:
'O mine have ebbd away for evermore,
And all through following you to this wild wood,
Because I saw you sad, to comfort you.
Lo now, what hearts have men! they never mount
As high as woman in her selfless mood.
And touching fame, howe'er ye scorn my song,
Take one verse more--the lady speaks it--this:

"My name, once mine, now thine, is closelier mine,
For fame, could fame be mine, that fame were thine,
And shame, could shame be thine, that shame were mine.
So trust me not at all or all in all."

'Says she not well? and there is more--this rhyme
Is like the fair pearl-necklace of the Queen,
That burst in dancing, and the pearls were spilt;
Some lost, some stolen, some as relics kept.
But nevermore the same two sister pearls
Ran down the silken thread to kiss each other
On her white neck--so is it with this rhyme:
It lives dispersedly in many hands,
And every minstrel sings it differently;
Yet is there one true line, the pearl of pearls:
"Man dreams of Fame while woman wakes to love."
Yea! Love, though Love were of the grossest, carves
A portion from the solid present, eats
And uses, careless of the rest; but Fame,
The Fame that follows death is nothing to us;
And what is Fame in life but half-disfame,
And counterchanged with darkness? ye yourself
Know well that Envy calls you Devil's son,
And since ye seem the Master of all Art,
They fain would make you Master of all vice.'

And Merlin locked his hand in hers and said,
'I once was looking for a magic weed,
And found a fair young squire who sat alone,

Had carved himself a knightly shield of wood,
And then was painting on it fancied arms,
Azure, an Eagle rising or, the Sun
In dexter chief; the scroll "I follow fame."
And speaking not, but leaning over him
I took his brush and blotted out the bird,
And made a Gardener putting in a graff,
With this for motto, "Rather use than fame."
You should have seen him blush; but afterwards
He made a stalwart knight. O Vivien,
For you, methinks you think you love me well;
For me, I love you somewhat; rest: and Love
Should have some rest and pleasure in himself,
Not ever be too curious for a boon,
Too prurient for a proof against the grain
Of him ye say ye love: but Fame with men,
Being but ampler means to serve mankind,
Should have small rest or pleasure in herself,
But work as vassal to the larger love,
That dwarfs the petty love of one to one.
Use gave me Fame at first, and Fame again
Increasing gave me use. Lo, there my boon!
What other? for men sought to prove me vile,
Because I fain had given them greater wits:
And then did Envy call me Devil's son:
The sick weak beast seeking to help herself
By striking at her better, missed, and brought
Her own claw back, and wounded her own heart.
Sweet were the days when I was all unknown,
But when my name was lifted up, the storm
Broke on the mountain and I cared not for it.
Right well know I that Fame is half-disfame,
Yet needs must work my work. That other fame,
To one at least, who hath not children, vague,
The cackle of the unborn about the grave,
I cared not for it: a single misty star,
Which is the second in a line of stars
That seem a sword beneath a belt of three,
I never gazed upon it but I dreamt
Of some vast charm concluded in that star
To make fame nothing. Wherefore, if I fear,
Giving you power upon me through this charm,
That you might play me falsely, having power,
However well ye think ye love me now
(As sons of kings loving in pupilage
Have turned to tyrants when they came to power)

I rather dread the loss of use than fame;
If you--and not so much from wickedness,
As some wild turn of anger, or a mood
Of overstrained affection, it may be,
To keep me all to your own self,--or else
A sudden spurt of woman's jealousy,--
Should try this charm on whom ye say ye love.'

And Vivien answered smiling as in wrath:
'Have I not sworn? I am not trusted. Good!
Well, hide it, hide it; I shall find it out;
And being found take heed of Vivien.
A woman and not trusted, doubtless I
Might feel some sudden turn of anger born
Of your misfaith; and your fine epithet
Is accurate too, for this full love of mine
Without the full heart back may merit well
Your term of overstrained. So used as I,
My daily wonder is, I love at all.
And as to woman's jealousy, O why not?
O to what end, except a jealous one,
And one to make me jealous if I love,
Was this fair charm invented by yourself?
I well believe that all about this world
Ye cage a buxom captive here and there,
Closed in the four walls of a hollow tower
From which is no escape for evermore.'

Then the great Master merrily answered her:
'Full many a love in loving youth was mine;
I needed then no charm to keep them mine
But youth and love; and that full heart of yours
Whereof ye prattle, may now assure you mine;
So live uncharmed. For those who wrought it first,
The wrist is parted from the hand that waved,
The feet unmortised from their ankle-bones
Who paced it, ages back: but will ye hear
The legend as in guerdon for your rhyme?

'There lived a king in the most Eastern East,
Less old than I, yet older, for my blood
Hath earnest in it of far springs to be.
A tawny pirate anchored in his port,
Whose bark had plundered twenty nameless isles;
And passing one, at the high peep of dawn,
He saw two cities in a thousand boats

All fighting for a woman on the sea.
And pushing his black craft among them all,
He lightly scattered theirs and brought her off,
With loss of half his people arrow-slain;
A maid so smooth, so white, so wonderful,
They said a light came from her when she moved:
And since the pirate would not yield her up,
The King impaled him for his piracy;
Then made her Queen: but those isle-nurtured eyes
Waged such unwilling though successful war
On all the youth, they sickened; councils thinned,
And armies waned, for magnet-like she drew
The rustiest iron of old fighters' hearts;
And beasts themselves would worship; camels knelt
Unbidden, and the brutes of mountain back
That carry kings in castles, bowed black knees
Of homage, ringing with their serpent hands,
To make her smile, her golden ankle-bells.
What wonder, being jealous, that he sent
His horns of proclamation out through all
The hundred under-kingdoms that he swayed
To find a wizard who might teach the King
Some charm, which being wrought upon the Queen
Might keep her all his own: to such a one
He promised more than ever king has given,
A league of mountain full of golden mines,
A province with a hundred miles of coast,
A palace and a princess, all for him:
But on all those who tried and failed, the King
Pronounced a dismal sentence, meaning by it
To keep the list low and pretenders back,
Or like a king, not to be trifled with--
Their heads should moulder on the city gates.
And many tried and failed, because the charm
Of nature in her overbore their own:
And many a wizard brow bleached on the walls:
And many weeks a troop of carrion crows
Hung like a cloud above the gateway towers.'

And Vivien breaking in upon him, said:
'I sit and gather honey; yet, methinks,
Thy tongue has tript a little: ask thyself.
The lady never made UNWILLING war
With those fine eyes: she had her pleasure in it,
And made her good man jealous with good cause.
And lived there neither dame nor damsel then

Wroth at a lover's loss? were all as tame,
I mean, as noble, as the Queen was fair?
Not one to flirt a venom at her eyes,
Or pinch a murderous dust into her drink,
Or make her paler with a poisoned rose?
Well, those were not our days: but did they find
A wizard? Tell me, was he like to thee?

She ceased, and made her lithe arm round his neck
Tighten, and then drew back, and let her eyes
Speak for her, glowing on him, like a bride's
On her new lord, her own, the first of men.

He answered laughing, 'Nay, not like to me.
At last they found--his foragers for charms--
A little glassy-headed hairless man,
Who lived alone in a great wild on grass;
Read but one book, and ever reading grew
So grated down and filed away with thought,
So lean his eyes were monstrous; while the skin
Clung but to crate and basket, ribs and spine.
And since he kept his mind on one sole aim,
Nor ever touched fierce wine, nor tasted flesh,
Nor owned a sensual wish, to him the wall
That sunders ghosts and shadow-casting men
Became a crystal, and he saw them through it,
And heard their voices talk behind the wall,
And learnt their elemental secrets, powers
And forces; often o'er the sun's bright eye
Drew the vast eyelid of an inky cloud,
And lashed it at the base with slanting storm;
Or in the noon of mist and driving rain,
When the lake whitened and the pinewood roared,
And the cairned mountain was a shadow, sunned
The world to peace again: here was the man.
And so by force they dragged him to the King.
And then he taught the King to charm the Queen
In such-wise, that no man could see her more,
Nor saw she save the King, who wrought the charm,
Coming and going, and she lay as dead,
And lost all use of life: but when the King
Made proffer of the league of golden mines,
The province with a hundred miles of coast,
The palace and the princess, that old man
Went back to his old wild, and lived on grass,
And vanished, and his book came down to me.'

And Vivien answered smiling saucily:
'Ye have the book: the charm is written in it:
Good: take my counsel: let me know it at once:
For keep it like a puzzle chest in chest,
With each chest locked and padlocked thirty-fold,
And whelm all this beneath as vast a mound
As after furious battle turfs the slain
On some wild down above the windy deep,
I yet should strike upon a sudden means
To dig, pick, open, find and read the charm:
Then, if I tried it, who should blame me then?'

And smiling as a master smiles at one
That is not of his school, nor any school
But that where blind and naked Ignorance
Delivers brawling judgments, unashamed,
On all things all day long, he answered her:

'Thou read the book, my pretty Vivien!
O ay, it is but twenty pages long,
But every page having an ample marge,
And every marge enclosing in the midst
A square of text that looks a little blot,
The text no larger than the limbs of fleas;
And every square of text an awful charm,
Writ in a language that has long gone by.
So long, that mountains have arisen since
With cities on their flanks--thou read the book!
And ever margin scribbled, crost, and crammed
With comment, densest condensation, hard
To mind and eye; but the long sleepless nights
Of my long life have made it easy to me.
And none can read the text, not even I;
And none can read the comment but myself;
And in the comment did I find the charm.
O, the results are simple; a mere child
Might use it to the harm of anyone,
And never could undo it: ask no more:
For though you should not prove it upon me,
But keep that oath ye sware, ye might, perchance,
Assay it on some one of the Table Round,
And all because ye dream they babble of you.'

And Vivien, frowning in true anger, said:
'What dare the full-fed liars say of me?

THEY ride abroad redressing human wrongs!
They sit with knife in meat and wine in horn!
THEY bound to holy vows of chastity!
Were I not woman, I could tell a tale.
But you are man, you well can understand
The shame that cannot be explained for shame.
Not one of all the drove should touch me: swine!

Then answered Merlin careless of her words:
'You breathe but accusation vast and vague,
Spleen-born, I think, and proofless. If ye know,
Set up the charge ye know, to stand or fall!'

And Vivien answered frowning wrathfully:
'O ay, what say ye to Sir Valence, him
Whose kinsman left him watcher o'er his wife
And two fair babes, and went to distant lands;
Was one year gone, and on returning found
Not two but three? there lay the reckling, one
But one hour old! What said the happy sire?'
A seven-months' babe had been a truer gift.
Those twelve sweet moons confused his fatherhood.'

Then answered Merlin, 'Nay, I know the tale.
Sir Valence wedded with an outland dame:
Some cause had kept him sundered from his wife:
One child they had: it lived with her: she died:
His kinsman travelling on his own affair
Was charged by Valence to bring home the child.
He brought, not found it therefore: take the truth.'

'O ay,' said Vivien, 'overtrue a tale.
What say ye then to sweet Sir Sagramore,
That ardent man? "to pluck the flower in season,"
So says the song, "I trow it is no treason."
O Master, shall we call him overquick
To crop his own sweet rose before the hour?'

And Merlin answered, 'Overquick art thou
To catch a loathly plume fallen from the wing
Of that foul bird of rapine whose whole prey
Is man's good name: he never wronged his bride.
I know the tale. An angry gust of wind
Puffed out his torch among the myriad-roomed
And many-corridored complexities
Of Arthur's palace: then he found a door,

And darkling felt the sculptured ornament
That wreathen round it made it seem his own;
And wearied out made for the couch and slept,
A stainless man beside a stainless maid;
And either slept, nor knew of other there;
Till the high dawn piercing the royal rose
In Arthur's casement glimmered chastely down,
Blushing upon them blushing, and at once
He rose without a word and parted from her:
But when the thing was blazed about the court,
The brute world howling forced them into bonds,
And as it chanced they are happy, being pure.'

'O ay,' said Vivien, 'that were likely too.
What say ye then to fair Sir Percivale
And of the horrid foulness that he wrought,
The saintly youth, the spotless lamb of Christ,
Or some black wether of St Satan's fold.
What, in the precincts of the chapel-yard,
Among the knightly brasses of the graves,
And by the cold Hic Jacets of the dead!'

And Merlin answered careless of her charge,
'A sober man is Percivale and pure;
But once in life was flustered with new wine,
Then paced for coolness in the chapel-yard;
Where one of Satan's shepherdesses caught
And meant to stamp him with her master's mark;
And that he sinned is not believable;
For, look upon his face!--but if he sinned,
The sin that practice burns into the blood,
And not the one dark hour which brings remorse,
Will brand us, after, of whose fold we be:
Or else were he, the holy king, whose hymns
Are chanted in the minster, worse than all.
But is your spleen frothed out, or have ye more?'

And Vivien answered frowning yet in wrath:
'O ay; what say ye to Sir Lancelot, friend
Traitor or true? that commerce with the Queen,
I ask you, is it clamoured by the child,
Or whispered in the corner? do ye know it?'

To which he answered sadly, 'Yea, I know it.
Sir Lancelot went ambassador, at first,
To fetch her, and she watched him from her walls.

A rumour runs, she took him for the King,
So fixt her fancy on him: let them be.
But have ye no one word of loyal praise
For Arthur, blameless King and stainless man?'

She answered with a low and chuckling laugh:
'Man! is he man at all, who knows and winks?
Sees what his fair bride is and does, and winks?
By which the good King means to blind himself,
And blinds himself and all the Table Round
To all the foulness that they work. Myself
Could call him (were it not for womanhood)
The pretty, popular cause such manhood earns,
Could call him the main cause of all their crime;
Yea, were he not crowned King, coward, and fool.'

Then Merlin to his own heart, loathing, said:
'O true and tender! O my liege and King!
O selfless man and stainless gentleman,
Who wouldst against thine own eye-witness fain
Have all men true and leal, all women pure;
How, in the mouths of base interpreters,
From over-fineness not intelligible
To things with every sense as false and foul
As the poached filth that floods the middle street,
Is thy white blamelessness accounted blame!'

But Vivien, deeming Merlin overborne
By instance, recommenced, and let her tongue
Rage like a fire among the noblest names,
Polluting, and imputing her whole self,
Defaming and defacing, till she left
Not even Lancelot brave, nor Galahad clean.

Her words had issue other than she willed.
He dragged his eyebrow bushes down, and made
A snowy penthouse for his hollow eyes,
And muttered in himself, 'Tell HER the charm!
So, if she had it, would she rail on me
To snare the next, and if she have it not
So will she rail. What did the wanton say?
"Not mount as high;" we scarce can sink as low:
For men at most differ as Heaven and earth,
But women, worst and best, as Heaven and Hell.
I know the Table Round, my friends of old;
All brave, and many generous, and some chaste.

She cloaks the scar of some repulse with lies;
I well believe she tempted them and failed,
Being so bitter: for fine plots may fail,
Though harlots paint their talk as well as face
With colours of the heart that are not theirs.
I will not let her know: nine tithes of times
Face-flatterer and backbiter are the same.
And they, sweet soul, that most impute a crime
Are prone to it, and impute themselves,
Wanting the mental range; or low desire
Not to feel lowest makes them level all;
Yea, they would pare the mountain to the plain,
To leave an equal baseness; and in this
Are harlots like the crowd, that if they find
Some stain or blemish in a name of note,
Not grieving that their greatest are so small,
Inflate themselves with some insane delight,
And judge all nature from her feet of clay,
Without the will to lift their eyes, and see
Her godlike head crowned with spiritual fire,
And touching other worlds. I am weary of her.'

He spoke in words part heard, in whispers part,
Half-suffocated in the hoary fell
And many-wintered fleece of throat and chin.
But Vivien, gathering somewhat of his mood,
And hearing 'harlot' muttered twice or thrice,
Leapt from her session on his lap, and stood
Stiff as a viper frozen; loathsome sight,
How from the rosy lips of life and love,
Flashed the bare-grinning skeleton of death!
White was her cheek; sharp breaths of anger puffed
Her fairy nostril out; her hand half-clenched
Went faltering sideways downward to her belt,
And feeling; had she found a dagger there
(For in a wink the false love turns to hate)
She would have stabbed him; but she found it not:
His eye was calm, and suddenly she took
To bitter weeping like a beaten child,
A long, long weeping, not consolable.
Then her false voice made way, broken with sobs:

'O crueller than was ever told in tale,
Or sung in song! O vainly lavished love!
O cruel, there was nothing wild or strange,
Or seeming shameful--for what shame in love,

So love be true, and not as yours is--nothing
Poor Vivien had not done to win his trust
Who called her what he called her--all her crime,
All--all--the wish to prove him wholly hers.'

She mused a little, and then clapt her hands
Together with a wailing shriek, and said:
'Stabbed through the heart's affections to the heart!
Seethed like the kid in its own mother's milk!
Killed with a word worse than a life of blows!
I thought that he was gentle, being great:
O God, that I had loved a smaller man!
I should have found in him a greater heart.
O, I, that flattering my true passion, saw
The knights, the court, the King, dark in your light,
Who loved to make men darker than they are,
Because of that high pleasure which I had
To seat you sole upon my pedestal
Of worship--I am answered, and henceforth
The course of life that seemed so flowery to me
With you for guide and master, only you,
Becomes the sea-cliff pathway broken short,
And ending in a ruin--nothing left,
But into some low cave to crawl, and there,
If the wolf spare me, weep my life away,
Killed with inutterable unkindliness.'

She paused, she turned away, she hung her head,
The snake of gold slid from her hair, the braid
Slipt and uncoiled itself, she wept afresh,
And the dark wood grew darker toward the storm
In silence, while his anger slowly died
Within him, till he let his wisdom go
For ease of heart, and half believed her true:
Called her to shelter in the hollow oak,
'Come from the storm,' and having no reply,
Gazed at the heaving shoulder, and the face
Hand-hidden, as for utmost grief or shame;
Then thrice essayed, by tenderest-touching terms,
To sleek her ruffled peace of mind, in vain.
At last she let herself be conquered by him,
And as the cageling newly flown returns,
The seeming-injured simple-hearted thing
Came to her old perch back, and settled there.
There while she sat, half-falling from his knees,
Half-nestled at his heart, and since he saw

The slow tear creep from her closed eyelid yet,
About her, more in kindness than in love,
The gentle wizard cast a shielding arm.
But she dislinked herself at once and rose,
Her arms upon her breast across, and stood,
A virtuous gentlewoman deeply wronged,
Upright and flushed before him: then she said:

'There must now be no passages of love
Betwixt us twain henceforward evermore;
Since, if I be what I am grossly called,
What should be granted which your own gross heart
Would reckon worth the taking? I will go.
In truth, but one thing now--better have died
Thrice than have asked it once--could make me stay--
That proof of trust--so often asked in vain!
How justly, after that vile term of yours,
I find with grief! I might believe you then,
Who knows? once more. Lo! what was once to me
Mere matter of the fancy, now hath grown
The vast necessity of heart and life.
Farewell; think gently of me, for I fear
My fate or folly, passing gayer youth
For one so old, must be to love thee still.
But ere I leave thee let me swear once more
That if I schemed against thy peace in this,
May yon just heaven, that darkens o'er me, send
One flash, that, missing all things else, may make
My scheming brain a cinder, if I lie.'

Scarce had she ceased, when out of heaven a bolt
(For now the storm was close above them) struck,
Furrowing a giant oak, and javelining
With darted spikes and splinters of the wood
The dark earth round. He raised his eyes and saw
The tree that shone white-listed through the gloom.
But Vivien, fearing heaven had heard her oath,
And dazzled by the livid-flickering fork,
And deafened with the stammering cracks and claps
That followed, flying back and crying out,
'O Merlin, though you do not love me, save,
Yet save me!' clung to him and hugged him close;
And called him dear protector in her fright,
Nor yet forgot her practice in her fright,
But wrought upon his mood and hugged him close.
The pale blood of the wizard at her touch

Took gayer colours, like an opal warmed.
She blamed herself for telling hearsay tales:
She shook from fear, and for her fault she wept
Of petulancy; she called him lord and liege,
Her seer, her bard, her silver star of eve,
Her God, her Merlin, the one passionate love
Of her whole life; and ever overhead
Bellowed the tempest, and the rotten branch
Snapt in the rushing of the river-rain
Above them; and in change of glare and gloom
Her eyes and neck glittering went and came;
Till now the storm, its burst of passion spent,
Moaning and calling out of other lands,
Had left the ravaged woodland yet once more
To peace; and what should not have been had been,
For Merlin, overtalked and overworn,
Had yielded, told her all the charm, and slept.

Then, in one moment, she put forth the charm
Of woven paces and of waving hands,
And in the hollow oak he lay as dead,
And lost to life and use and name and fame.

Then crying 'I have made his glory mine,'
And shrieking out 'O fool!' the harlot leapt
Adown the forest, and the thicket closed
Behind her, and the forest echoed 'fool.'

Lancelot and Elaine

Elaine the fair, Elaine the loveable,
Elaine, the lily maid of Astolat,
High in her chamber up a tower to the east
Guarded the sacred shield of Lancelot;
Which first she placed where the morning's earliest ray
Might strike it, and awake her with the gleam;
Then fearing rust or soilure fashioned for it
A case of silk, and braided thereupon
All the devices blazoned on the shield

In their own tinct, and added, of her wit,
A border fantasy of branch and flower,
And yellow-throated nestling in the nest.
Nor rested thus content, but day by day,
Leaving her household and good father, climbed
That eastern tower, and entering barred her door,
Stript off the case, and read the naked shield,
Now guessed a hidden meaning in his arms,
Now made a pretty history to herself
Of every dint a sword had beaten in it,
And every scratch a lance had made upon it,
Conjecturing when and where: this cut is fresh;
That ten years back; this dealt him at Caerlyle;
That at Caerleon; this at Camelot:
And ah God's mercy, what a stroke was there!
And here a thrust that might have killed, but God
Broke the strong lance, and rolled his enemy down,
And saved him: so she lived in fantasy.

How came the lily maid by that good shield
Of Lancelot, she that knew not even his name?
He left it with her, when he rode to tilt
For the great diamond in the diamond jousts,
Which Arthur had ordained, and by that name
Had named them, since a diamond was the prize.

For Arthur, long before they crowned him King,
Roving the trackless realms of Lyonesse,
Had found a glen, gray boulder and black tarn.
A horror lived about the tarn, and clave
Like its own mists to all the mountain side:
For here two brothers, one a king, had met
And fought together; but their names were lost;
And each had slain his brother at a blow;
And down they fell and made the glen abhorred:
And there they lay till all their bones were bleached,
And lichened into colour with the crags:
And he, that once was king, had on a crown
Of diamonds, one in front, and four aside.
And Arthur came, and labouring up the pass,
All in a misty moonshine, unawares
Had trodden that crowned skeleton, and the skull
Broke from the nape, and from the skull the crown
Rolled into light, and turning on its rims
Fled like a glittering rivulet to the tarn:
And down the shingly scaur he plunged, and caught,

And set it on his head, and in his heart
Heard murmurs, 'Lo, thou likewise shalt be King.'

Thereafter, when a King, he had the gems
Plucked from the crown, and showed them to his knights,
Saying, 'These jewels, whereupon I chanced
Divinely, are the kingdom's, not the King's--
For public use: henceforward let there be,
Once every year, a joust for one of these:
For so by nine years' proof we needs must learn
Which is our mightiest, and ourselves shall grow
In use of arms and manhood, till we drive
The heathen, who, some say, shall rule the land
Hereafter, which God hinder.' Thus he spoke:
And eight years past, eight jousts had been, and still
Had Lancelot won the diamond of the year,
With purpose to present them to the Queen,
When all were won; but meaning all at once
To snare her royal fancy with a boon
Worth half her realm, had never spoken word.

Now for the central diamond and the last
And largest, Arthur, holding then his court
Hard on the river nigh the place which now
Is this world's hugest, let proclaim a joust
At Camelot, and when the time drew nigh
Spake (for she had been sick) to Guinevere,
'Are you so sick, my Queen, you cannot move
To these fair jousts?' 'Yea, lord,' she said, 'ye know it.'
'Then will ye miss,' he answered, 'the great deeds
Of Lancelot, and his prowess in the lists,
A sight ye love to look on.' And the Queen
Lifted her eyes, and they dwelt languidly
On Lancelot, where he stood beside the King.
He thinking that he read her meaning there,
'Stay with me, I am sick; my love is more
Than many diamonds,' yielded; and a heart
Love-loyal to the least wish of the Queen
(However much he yearned to make complete
The tale of diamonds for his destined boon)
Urged him to speak against the truth, and say,
'Sir King, mine ancient wound is hardly whole,
And lets me from the saddle;' and the King
Glanced first at him, then her, and went his way.
No sooner gone than suddenly she began:

'To blame, my lord Sir Lancelot, much to blame!
Why go ye not to these fair jousts? the knights
Are half of them our enemies, and the crowd
Will murmur, "Lo the shameless ones, who take
Their pastime now the trustful King is gone!"
Then Lancelot vext at having lied in vain:
'Are ye so wise? ye were not once so wise,
My Queen, that summer, when ye loved me first.
Then of the crowd ye took no more account
Than of the myriad cricket of the mead,
When its own voice clings to each blade of grass,
And every voice is nothing. As to knights,
Them surely can I silence with all ease.
But now my loyal worship is allowed
Of all men: many a bard, without offence,
Has linked our names together in his lay,
Lancelot, the flower of bravery, Guinevere,
The pearl of beauty: and our knights at feast
Have pledged us in this union, while the King
Would listen smiling. How then? is there more?
Has Arthur spoken aught? or would yourself,
Now weary of my service and devoir,
Henceforth be truer to your faultless lord?'

She broke into a little scornful laugh:
'Arthur, my lord, Arthur, the faultless King,
That passionate perfection, my good lord--
But who can gaze upon the Sun in heaven?
He never spake word of reproach to me,
He never had a glimpse of mine untruth,
He cares not for me: only here today
There gleamed a vague suspicion in his eyes:
Some meddling rogue has tampered with him--else
Rapt in this fancy of his Table Round,
And swearing men to vows impossible,
To make them like himself: but, friend, to me
He is all fault who hath no fault at all:
For who loves me must have a touch of earth;
The low sun makes the colour: I am yours,
Not Arthur's, as ye know, save by the bond.
And therefore hear my words: go to the jousts:
The tiny-trumpeting gnat can break our dream
When sweetest; and the vermin voices here
May buzz so loud--we scorn them, but they sting.'

Then answered Lancelot, the chief of knights:

'And with what face, after my pretext made,
Shall I appear, O Queen, at Camelot, I
Before a King who honours his own word,
As if it were his God's?'

'Yea,' said the Queen,
'A moral child without the craft to rule,
Else had he not lost me: but listen to me,
If I must find you wit: we hear it said
That men go down before your spear at a touch,
But knowing you are Lancelot; your great name,
This conquers: hide it therefore; go unknown:
Win! by this kiss you will: and our true King
Will then allow your pretext, O my knight,
As all for glory; for to speak him true,
Ye know right well, how meek soe'er he seem,
No keener hunter after glory breathes.
He loves it in his knights more than himself:
They prove to him his work: win and return.'

Then got Sir Lancelot suddenly to horse,
Wroth at himself. Not willing to be known,
He left the barren-beaten thoroughfare,
Chose the green path that showed the rarer foot,
And there among the solitary downs,
Full often lost in fancy, lost his way;
Till as he traced a faintly-shadowed track,
That all in loops and links among the dales
Ran to the Castle of Astolat, he saw
Fired from the west, far on a hill, the towers.
Thither he made, and blew the gateway horn.
Then came an old, dumb, myriad-wrinkled man,
Who let him into lodging and disarmed.
And Lancelot marvelled at the wordless man;
And issuing found the Lord of Astolat
With two strong sons, Sir Torre and Sir Lavaine,
Moving to meet him in the castle court;
And close behind them stept the lily maid
Elaine, his daughter: mother of the house
There was not: some light jest among them rose
With laughter dying down as the great knight
Approached them: then the Lord of Astolat:
'Whence comes thou, my guest, and by what name
Livest thou between the lips? for by thy state
And presence I might guess thee chief of those,
After the King, who eat in Arthur's halls.

Him have I seen: the rest, his Table Round,
Known as they are, to me they are unknown.'

Then answered Sir Lancelot, the chief of knights:
'Known am I, and of Arthur's hall, and known,
What I by mere mischance have brought, my shield.
But since I go to joust as one unknown
At Camelot for the diamond, ask me not,
Hereafter ye shall know me--and the shield--
I pray you lend me one, if such you have,
Blank, or at least with some device not mine.'

Then said the Lord of Astolat, 'Here is Torre's:
Hurt in his first tilt was my son, Sir Torre.
And so, God wot, his shield is blank enough.
His ye can have.' Then added plain Sir Torre,
'Yea, since I cannot use it, ye may have it.'
Here laughed the father saying, 'Fie, Sir Churl,
Is that answer for a noble knight?
Allow him! but Lavaine, my younger here,
He is so full of lustihood, he will ride,
Joust for it, and win, and bring it in an hour,
And set it in this damsel's golden hair,
To make her thrice as wilful as before.'

'Nay, father, nay good father, shame me not
Before this noble knight,' said young Lavaine,
'For nothing. Surely I but played on Torre:
He seemed so sullen, vext he could not go:
A jest, no more! for, knight, the maiden dreamt
That some one put this diamond in her hand,
And that it was too slippery to be held,
And slipt and fell into some pool or stream,
The castle-well, belike; and then I said
That IF I went and IF I fought and won it
(But all was jest and joke among ourselves)
Then must she keep it safelier. All was jest.
But, father, give me leave, an if he will,
To ride to Camelot with this noble knight:
Win shall I not, but do my best to win:
Young as I am, yet would I do my best.'

'So will ye grace me,' answered Lancelot,
Smiling a moment, 'with your fellowship
O'er these waste downs whereon I lost myself,
Then were I glad of you as guide and friend:

And you shall win this diamond,--as I hear
It is a fair large diamond,--if ye may,
And yield it to this maiden, if ye will.'
'A fair large diamond,' added plain Sir Torre,
'Such be for queens, and not for simple maids.'
Then she, who held her eyes upon the ground,
Elaine, and heard her name so tost about,
Flushed slightly at the slight disparagement
Before the stranger knight, who, looking at her,
Full courtly, yet not falsely, thus returned:
'If what is fair be but for what is fair,
And only queens are to be counted so,
Rash were my judgment then, who deem this maid
Might wear as fair a jewel as is on earth,
Not violating the bond of like to like.'

He spoke and ceased: the lily maid Elaine,
Won by the mellow voice before she looked,
Lifted her eyes, and read his lineaments.
The great and guilty love he bare the Queen,
In battle with the love he bare his lord,
Had marred his face, and marked it ere his time.
Another sinning on such heights with one,
The flower of all the west and all the world,
Had been the sleeker for it: but in him
His mood was often like a fiend, and rose
And drove him into wastes and solitudes
For agony, who was yet a living soul.
Marred as he was, he seemed the goodliest man
That ever among ladies ate in hall,
And noblest, when she lifted up her eyes.
However marred, of more than twice her years,
Seamed with an ancient swordcut on the cheek,
And bruised and bronzed, she lifted up her eyes
And loved him, with that love which was her doom.

Then the great knight, the darling of the court,
Loved of the loveliest, into that rude hall
Stept with all grace, and not with half disdain
Hid under grace, as in a smaller time,
But kindly man moving among his kind:
Whom they with meats and vintage of their best
And talk and minstrel melody entertained.
And much they asked of court and Table Round,
And ever well and readily answered he:
But Lancelot, when they glanced at Guinevere,

Suddenly speaking of the wordless man,
Heard from the Baron that, ten years before,
The heathen caught and reft him of his tongue.
'He learnt and warned me of their fierce design
Against my house, and him they caught and maimed;
But I, my sons, and little daughter fled
From bonds or death, and dwelt among the woods
By the great river in a boatman's hut.
Dull days were those, till our good Arthur broke
The Pagan yet once more on Badon hill.'

'O there, great lord, doubtless,' Lavaine said, rapt
By all the sweet and sudden passion of youth
Toward greatness in its elder, 'you have fought.
O tell us--for we live apart--you know
Of Arthur's glorious wars.' And Lancelot spoke
And answered him at full, as having been
With Arthur in the fight which all day long
Rang by the white mouth of the violent Glem;
And in the four loud battles by the shore
Of Duglas; that on Bassa; then the war
That thundered in and out the gloomy skirts
Of Celidon the forest; and again
By castle Gurnion, where the glorious King
Had on his cuirass worn our Lady's Head,
Carved of one emerald centered in a sun
Of silver rays, that lightened as he breathed;
And at Caerleon had he helped his lord,
When the strong neighings of the wild white Horse
Set every gilded parapet shuddering;
And up in Agned-Cathregonion too,
And down the waste sand-shores of Trath Treroit,
Where many a heathen fell; 'and on the mount
Of Badon I myself beheld the King
Charge at the head of all his Table Round,
And all his legions crying Christ and him,
And break them; and I saw him, after, stand
High on a heap of slain, from spur to plume
Red as the rising sun with heathen blood,
And seeing me, with a great voice he cried,
"They are broken, they are broken!" for the King,
However mild he seems at home, nor cares
For triumph in our mimic wars, the jousts--
For if his own knight cast him down, he laughs
Saying, his knights are better men than he--
Yet in this heathen war the fire of God

Fills him: I never saw his like: there lives
No greater leader.'

While he uttered this,
Low to her own heart said the lily maid,
'Save your own great self, fair lord;' and when he fell
From talk of war to traits of pleasantry--
Being mirthful he, but in a stately kind--
She still took note that when the living smile
Died from his lips, across him came a cloud
Of melancholy severe, from which again,
Whenever in her hovering to and fro
The lily maid had striven to make him cheer,
There brake a sudden-beaming tenderness
Of manners and of nature: and she thought
That all was nature, all, perchance, for her.
And all night long his face before her lived,
As when a painter, poring on a face,
Divinely through all hindrance finds the man
Behind it, and so paints him that his face,
The shape and colour of a mind and life,
Lives for his children, ever at its best
And fullest; so the face before her lived,
Dark-splendid, speaking in the silence, full
Of noble things, and held her from her sleep.
Till rathe she rose, half-cheated in the thought
She needs must bid farewell to sweet Lavaine.
First in fear, step after step, she stole
Down the long tower-stairs, hesitating:
Anon, she heard Sir Lancelot cry in the court,
'This shield, my friend, where is it?' and Lavaine
Past inward, as she came from out the tower.
There to his proud horse Lancelot turned, and smoothed
The glossy shoulder, humming to himself.
Half-envious of the flattering hand, she drew
Nearer and stood. He looked, and more amazed
Than if seven men had set upon him, saw
The maiden standing in the dewy light.
He had not dreamed she was so beautiful.
Then came on him a sort of sacred fear,
For silent, though he greeted her, she stood
Rapt on his face as if it were a God's.
Suddenly flashed on her a wild desire,
That he should wear her favour at the tilt.
She braved a riotous heart in asking for it.
'Fair lord, whose name I know not--noble it is,

I well believe, the noblest--will you wear
My favour at this tourney?' 'Nay,' said he,
'Fair lady, since I never yet have worn
Favour of any lady in the lists.
Such is my wont, as those, who know me, know.'
'Yea, so,' she answered; 'then in wearing mine
Needs must be lesser likelihood, noble lord,
That those who know should know you.' And he turned
Her counsel up and down within his mind,
And found it true, and answered, 'True, my child.
Well, I will wear it: fetch it out to me:
What is it?' and she told him 'A red sleeve
Broidered with pearls,' and brought it: then he bound
Her token on his helmet, with a smile
Saying, 'I never yet have done so much
For any maiden living,' and the blood
Sprang to her face and filled her with delight;
But left her all the paler, when Lavaine
Returning brought the yet-unblazoned shield,
His brother's; which he gave to Lancelot,
Who parted with his own to fair Elaine:
'Do me this grace, my child, to have my shield
In keeping till I come.' 'A grace to me,'
She answered, 'twice today. I am your squire!'
Whereat Lavaine said, laughing, 'Lily maid,
For fear our people call you lily maid
In earnest, let me bring your colour back;
Once, twice, and thrice: now get you hence to bed:'
So kissed her, and Sir Lancelot his own hand,
And thus they moved away: she stayed a minute,
Then made a sudden step to the gate, and there--
Her bright hair blown about the serious face
Yet rosy-kindled with her brother's kiss--
Paused by the gateway, standing near the shield
In silence, while she watched their arms far-off
Sparkle, until they dipt below the downs.
Then to her tower she climbed, and took the shield,
There kept it, and so lived in fantasy.

Meanwhile the new companions past away
Far o'er the long backs of the bushless downs,
To where Sir Lancelot knew there lived a knight
Not far from Camelot, now for forty years
A hermit, who had prayed, laboured and prayed,
And ever labouring had scooped himself
In the white rock a chapel and a hall

On massive columns, like a shorecliff cave,
And cells and chambers: all were fair and dry;
The green light from the meadows underneath
Struck up and lived along the milky roofs;
And in the meadows tremulous aspen-trees
And poplars made a noise of falling showers.
And thither wending there that night they bode.

But when the next day broke from underground,
And shot red fire and shadows through the cave,
They rose, heard mass, broke fast, and rode away:
Then Lancelot saying, 'Hear, but hold my name
Hidden, you ride with Lancelot of the Lake,'
Abashed young Lavaine, whose instant reverence,
Dearer to true young hearts than their own praise,
But left him leave to stammer, 'Is it indeed?'
And after muttering 'The great Lancelot,
At last he got his breath and answered, 'One,
One have I seen--that other, our liege lord,
The dread Pendragon, Britain's King of kings,
Of whom the people talk mysteriously,
He will be there--then were I stricken blind
That minute, I might say that I had seen.'

So spake Lavaine, and when they reached the lists
By Camelot in the meadow, let his eyes
Run through the peopled gallery which half round
Lay like a rainbow fallen upon the grass,
Until they found the clear-faced King, who sat
Robed in red samite, easily to be known,
Since to his crown the golden dragon clung,
And down his robe the dragon writhed in gold,
And from the carven-work behind him crept
Two dragons gilded, sloping down to make
Arms for his chair, while all the rest of them
Through knots and loops and folds innumerable
Fled ever through the woodwork, till they found
The new design wherein they lost themselves,
Yet with all ease, so tender was the work:
And, in the costly canopy o'er him set,
Blazed the last diamond of the nameless king.

Then Lancelot answered young Lavaine and said,
'Me you call great: mine is the firmer seat,
The truer lance: but there is many a youth
Now crescent, who will come to all I am

And overcome it; and in me there dwells
No greatness, save it be some far-off touch
Of greatness to know well I am not great:
There is the man.' And Lavaine gaped upon him
As on a thing miraculous, and anon
The trumpets blew; and then did either side,
They that assailed, and they that held the lists,
Set lance in rest, strike spur, suddenly move,
Meet in the midst, and there so furiously
Shock, that a man far-off might well perceive,
If any man that day were left afield,
The hard earth shake, and a low thunder of arms.
And Lancelot bode a little, till he saw
Which were the weaker; then he hurled into it
Against the stronger: little need to speak
Of Lancelot in his glory! King, duke, earl,
Count, baron--whom he smote, he overthrew.

But in the field were Lancelot's kith and kin,
Ranged with the Table Round that held the lists,
Strong men, and wrathful that a stranger knight
Should do and almost overdo the deeds
Of Lancelot; and one said to the other, 'Lo!
What is he? I do not mean the force alone--
The grace and versatility of the man!
Is it not Lancelot?' 'When has Lancelot worn
Favour of any lady in the lists?
Not such his wont, as we, that know him, know.'
'How then? who then?' a fury seized them all,
A fiery family passion for the name
Of Lancelot, and a glory one with theirs.
They couched their spears and pricked their steeds, and thus,
Their plumes driven backward by the wind they made
In moving, all together down upon him
Bare, as a wild wave in the wide North-sea,
Green-glimmering toward the summit, bears, with all
Its stormy crests that smoke against the skies,
Down on a bark, and overbears the bark,
And him that helms it, so they overbore
Sir Lancelot and his charger, and a spear
Down-glancing lamed the charger, and a spear
Pricked sharply his own cuirass, and the head
Pierced through his side, and there snapt, and remained.

Then Sir Lavaine did well and worshipfully;
He bore a knight of old repute to the earth,

And brought his horse to Lancelot where he lay.
He up the side, sweating with agony, got,
But thought to do while he might yet endure,
And being lustily holpen by the rest,
His party,--though it seemed half-miracle
To those he fought with,--dave his kith and kin,
And all the Table Round that held the lists,
Back to the barrier; then the trumpets blew
Proclaiming his the prize, who wore the sleeve
Of scarlet, and the pearls; and all the knights,
His party, cried 'Advance and take thy prize
The diamond;' but he answered, 'Diamond me
No diamonds! for God's love, a little air!
Prize me no prizes, for my prize is death!
Hence will I, and I charge you, follow me not.'

He spoke, and vanished suddenly from the field
With young Lavaine into the poplar grove.
There from his charger down he slid, and sat,
Gasping to Sir Lavaine, 'Draw the lance-head.'
'Ah my sweet lord Sir Lancelot,' said Lavaine,
'I dread me, if I draw it, you will die.'
But he, 'I die already with it: draw--
Draw,'--and Lavaine drew, and Sir Lancelot gave
A marvellous great shriek and ghastly groan,
And half his blood burst forth, and down he sank
For the pure pain, and wholly swooned away.
Then came the hermit out and bare him in,
There stanced his wound; and there, in daily doubt
Whether to live or die, for many a week
Hid from the wide world's rumour by the grove
Of poplars with their noise of falling showers,
And ever-tremulous aspen-trees, he lay.

But on that day when Lancelot fled the lists,
His party, knights of utmost North and West,
Lords of waste marches, kings of desolate isles,
Came round their great Pendragon, saying to him,
'Lo, Sire, our knight, through whom we won the day,
Hath gone sore wounded, and hath left his prize
Untaken, crying that his prize is death.'
'Heaven hinder,' said the King, 'that such an one,
So great a knight as we have seen today--
He seemed to me another Lancelot--
Yea, twenty times I thought him Lancelot--
He must not pass uncared for. Wherefore, rise,

O Gawain, and ride forth and find the knight.
Wounded and wearied needs must he be near.
I charge you that you get at once to horse.
And, knights and kings, there breathes not one of you
Will deem this prize of ours is rashly given:
His prowess was too wondrous. We will do him
No customary honour: since the knight
Came not to us, of us to claim the prize,
Ourselves will send it after. Rise and take
This diamond, and deliver it, and return,
And bring us where he is, and how he fares,
And cease not from your quest until ye find.'

So saying, from the carven flower above,
To which it made a restless heart, he took,
And gave, the diamond: then from where he sat
At Arthur's right, with smiling face arose,
With smiling face and frowning heart, a Prince
In the mid might and flourish of his May,
Gawain, surnamed The Courteous, fair and strong,
And after Lancelot, Tristram, and Geraint
And Gareth, a good knight, but therewithal
Sir Modred's brother, and the child of Lot,
Nor often loyal to his word, and now
Wroth that the King's command to sally forth
In quest of whom he knew not, made him leave
The banquet, and concourse of knights and kings.

So all in wrath he got to horse and went;
While Arthur to the banquet, dark in mood,
Past, thinking 'Is it Lancelot who hath come
Despite the wound he spake of, all for gain
Of glory, and hath added wound to wound,
And ridden away to die?' So feared the King,
And, after two days' tarriance there, returned.
Then when he saw the Queen, embracing asked,
'Love, are you yet so sick?' 'Nay, lord,' she said.
'And where is Lancelot?' Then the Queen amazed,
'Was he not with you? won he not your prize?'
'Nay, but one like him.' 'Why that like was he.'
And when the King demanded how she knew,
Said, 'Lord, no sooner had ye parted from us,
Than Lancelot told me of a common talk
That men went down before his spear at a touch,
But knowing he was Lancelot; his great name
Conquered; and therefore would he hide his name

From all men, even the King, and to this end
Had made a pretext of a hindering wound,
That he might joust unknown of all, and learn
If his old prowess were in aught decayed;
And added, "Our true Arthur, when he learns,
Will well allow me pretext, as for gain
Of purer glory."

Then replied the King:
'Far lovelier in our Lancelot had it been,
In lieu of idly dallying with the truth,
To have trusted me as he hath trusted thee.
Surely his King and most familiar friend
Might well have kept his secret. True, indeed,
Albeit I know my knights fantastical,
So fine a feat in our large Lancelot
Must needs have moved my laughter: now remains
But little cause for laughter: his own kin--
Ill news, my Queen, for all who love him, this!--
His kith and kin, not knowing, set upon him;
So that he went sore wounded from the field:
Yet good news too: for goodly hopes are mine
That Lancelot is no more a lonely heart.
He wore, against his wont, upon his helm
A sleeve of scarlet, brodered with great pearls,
Some gentle maiden's gift.'

'Yea, lord,' she said,
'Thy hopes are mine,' and saying that, she choked,
And sharply turned about to hide her face,
Past to her chamber, and there flung herself
Down on the great King's couch, and writhed upon it,
And clenched her fingers till they bit the palm,
And shrieked out 'Traitor' to the unhearing wall,
Then flashed into wild tears, and rose again,
And moved about her palace, proud and pale.

Gawain the while through all the region round
Rode with his diamond, wearied of the quest,
Touched at all points, except the poplar grove,
And came at last, though late, to Astolat:
Whom glittering in enamelled arms the maid
Glanced at, and cried, 'What news from Camelot, lord?
What of the knight with the red sleeve?' 'He won.'
'I knew it,' she said. 'But parted from the jousts
Hurt in the side,' whereat she caught her breath;

Through her own side she felt the sharp lance go;
Thereon she smote her hand: wellnigh she swooned:
And, while he gazed wonderingly at her, came
The Lord of Astolat out, to whom the Prince
Reported who he was, and on what quest
Sent, that he bore the prize and could not find
The victor, but had ridden a random round
To seek him, and had wearied of the search.
To whom the Lord of Astolat, 'Bide with us,
And ride no more at random, noble Prince!
Here was the knight, and here he left a shield;
This will he send or come for: furthermore
Our son is with him; we shall hear anon,
Needs must hear.' To this the courteous Prince
Accorded with his wonted courtesy,
Courtesy with a touch of traitor in it,
And stayed; and cast his eyes on fair Elaine:
Where could be found face daintier? then her shape
From forehead down to foot, perfect--again
From foot to forehead exquisitely turned:
'Well--if I bide, lo! this wild flower for me!
And oft they met among the garden yews,
And there he set himself to play upon her
With sallying wit, free flashes from a height
Above her, graces of the court, and songs,
Sighs, and slow smiles, and golden eloquence
And amorous adulation, till the maid
Rebelled against it, saying to him, 'Prince,
O loyal nephew of our noble King,
Why ask you not to see the shield he left,
Whence you might learn his name? Why slight your King,
And lose the quest he sent you on, and prove
No surer than our falcon yesterday,
Who lost the henn we slipt her at, and went
To all the winds?' 'Nay, by mine head,' said he,
'I lose it, as we lose the lark in heaven,
O damsel, in the light of your blue eyes;
But an ye will it let me see the shield.'
And when the shield was brought, and Gawain saw
Sir Lancelot's azure lions, crowned with gold,
Ramp in the field, he smote his thigh, and mocked:
'Right was the King! our Lancelot! that true man!'
'And right was I,' she answered merrily, 'I,
Who dreamed my knight the greatest knight of all.'
'And if I dreamed,' said Gawain, 'that you love
This greatest knight, your pardon! lo, ye know it!

Speak therefore: shall I waste myself in vain?'
Full simple was her answer, 'What know I?
My brethren have been all my fellowship;
And I, when often they have talked of love,
Wished it had been my mother, for they talked,
Meseemed, of what they knew not; so myself--
I know not if I know what true love is,
But if I know, then, if I love not him,
I know there is none other I can love.'
'Yea, by God's death,' said he, 'ye love him well,
But would not, knew ye what all others know,
And whom he loves.' 'So be it,' cried Elaine,
And lifted her fair face and moved away:
But he pursued her, calling, 'Stay a little!
One golden minute's grace! he wore your sleeve:
Would he break faith with one I may not name?
Must our true man change like a leaf at last?
Nay--like enow: why then, far be it from me
To cross our mighty Lancelot in his loves!
And, damsel, for I deem you know full well
Where your great knight is hidden, let me leave
My quest with you; the diamond also: here!
For if you love, it will be sweet to give it;
And if he love, it will be sweet to have it
From your own hand; and whether he love or not,
A diamond is a diamond. Fare you well
A thousand times!--a thousand times farewell!
Yet, if he love, and his love hold, we two
May meet at court hereafter: there, I think,
So ye will learn the courtesies of the court,
We two shall know each other.'

Then he gave,
And slightly kissed the hand to which he gave,
The diamond, and all wearied of the quest
Leapt on his horse, and carolling as he went
A true-love ballad, lightly rode away.

Thence to the court he past; there told the King
What the King knew, 'Sir Lancelot is the knight.'
And added, 'Sire, my liege, so much I learnt;
But failed to find him, though I rode all round
The region: but I lighted on the maid
Whose sleeve he wore; she loves him; and to her,
Deeming our courtesy is the truest law,
I gave the diamond: she will render it;

For by mine head she knows his hiding-place.'

The seldom-frowning King frowned, and replied,
'Too courteous truly! ye shall go no more
On quest of mine, seeing that ye forget
Obedience is the courtesy due to kings.'

He spake and parted. Wroth, but all in awe,
For twenty strokes of the blood, without a word,
Lingered that other, staring after him;
Then shook his hair, strode off, and buzzed abroad
About the maid of Astolat, and her love.
All ears were pricked at once, all tongues were loosed:
'The maid of Astolat loves Sir Lancelot,
Sir Lancelot loves the maid of Astolat.'
Some read the King's face, some the Queen's, and all
Had marvel what the maid might be, but most
Predoomed her as unworthy. One old dame
Came suddenly on the Queen with the sharp news.
She, that had heard the noise of it before,
But sorrowing Lancelot should have stooped so low,
Marred her friend's aim with pale tranquillity.
So ran the tale like fire about the court,
Fire in dry stubble a nine-days' wonder flared:
Till even the knights at banquet twice or thrice
Forgot to drink to Lancelot and the Queen,
And pledging Lancelot and the lily maid
Smiled at each other, while the Queen, who sat
With lips severely placid, felt the knot
Climb in her throat, and with her feet unseen
Crushed the wild passion out against the floor
Beneath the banquet, where all the meats became
As wormwood, and she hated all who pledged.

But far away the maid in Astolat,
Her guiltless rival, she that ever kept
The one-day-seen Sir Lancelot in her heart,
Crept to her father, while he mused alone,
Sat on his knee, stroked his gray face and said,
'Father, you call me wilful, and the fault
Is yours who let me have my will, and now,
Sweet father, will you let me lose my wits?'
'Nay,' said he, 'surely.' 'Wherefore, let me hence,'
She answered, 'and find out our dear Lavaine.'
'Ye will not lose your wits for dear Lavaine:
Bide,' answered he: 'we needs must hear anon

Of him, and of that other.' 'Ay,' she said,
'And of that other, for I needs must hence
And find that other, wheresoe'er he be,
And with mine own hand give his diamond to him,
Lest I be found as faithless in the quest
As yon proud Prince who left the quest to me.
Sweet father, I behold him in my dreams
Gaunt as it were the skeleton of himself,
Death-pale, for lack of gentle maiden's aid.
The gentler-born the maiden, the more bound,
My father, to be sweet and serviceable
To noble knights in sickness, as ye know
When these have worn their tokens: let me hence
I pray you.' Then her father nodding said,
'Ay, ay, the diamond: wit ye well, my child,
Right fain were I to learn this knight were whole,
Being our greatest: yea, and you must give it--
And sure I think this fruit is hung too high
For any mouth to gape for save a queen's--
Nay, I mean nothing: so then, get you gone,
Being so very wilful you must go.'

Lightly, her suit allowed, she slipt away,
And while she made her ready for her ride,
Her father's latest word hummed in her ear,
'Being so very wilful you must go,'
And changed itself and echoed in her heart,
'Being so very wilful you must die.'
But she was happy enough and shook it off,
As we shake off the bee that buzzes at us;
And in her heart she answered it and said,
'What matter, so I help him back to life?'
Then far away with good Sir Torre for guide
Rode o'er the long backs of the bushless downs
To Camelot, and before the city-gates
Came on her brother with a happy face
Making a roan horse caper and curvet
For pleasure all about a field of flowers:
Whom when she saw, 'Lavaine,' she cried, 'Lavaine,
How fares my lord Sir Lancelot?' He amazed,
'Torre and Elaine! why here? Sir Lancelot!
How know ye my lord's name is Lancelot?'
But when the maid had told him all her tale,
Then turned Sir Torre, and being in his moods
Left them, and under the strange-statued gate,
Where Arthur's wars were rendered mystically,

Past up the still rich city to his kin,
His own far blood, which dwelt at Camelot;
And her, Lavaine across the poplar grove
Led to the caves: there first she saw the casque
Of Lancelot on the wall: her scarlet sleeve,
Though carved and cut, and half the pearls away,
Streamed from it still; and in her heart she laughed,
Because he had not loosed it from his helm,
But meant once more perchance to tourney in it.
And when they gained the cell wherein he slept,
His battle-writhen arms and mighty hands
Lay naked on the wolfskin, and a dream
Of dragging down his enemy made them move.
Then she that saw him lying unsleek, unshorn,
Gaunt as it were the skeleton of himself,
Uttered a little tender dolorous cry.
The sound not wanted in a place so still
Woke the sick knight, and while he rolled his eyes
Yet blank from sleep, she started to him, saying,
'Your prize the diamond sent you by the King:'
His eyes glistened: she fancied 'Is it for me?'
And when the maid had told him all the tale
Of King and Prince, the diamond sent, the quest
Assigned to her not worthy of it, she knelt
Full lowly by the corners of his bed,
And laid the diamond in his open hand.
Her face was near, and as we kiss the child
That does the task assigned, he kissed her face.
At once she slipt like water to the floor.
'Alas,' he said, 'your ride hath wearied you.
Rest must you have.' 'No rest for me,' she said;
'Nay, for near you, fair lord, I am at rest.'
What might she mean by that? his large black eyes,
Yet larger through his leanness, dwelt upon her,
Till all her heart's sad secret blazed itself
In the heart's colours on her simple face;
And Lancelot looked and was perplexed in mind,
And being weak in body said no more;
But did not love the colour; woman's love,
Save one, he not regarded, and so turned
Sighing, and feigned a sleep until he slept.

Then rose Elaine and glided through the fields,
And past beneath the weirdly-sculptured gates
Far up the dim rich city to her kin;
There bode the night: but woke with dawn, and past

Down through the dim rich city to the fields,
Thence to the cave: so day by day she past
In either twilight ghost-like to and fro
Gliding, and every day she tended him,
And likewise many a night: and Lancelot
Would, though he called his wound a little hurt
Whereof he should be quickly whole, at times
Brain-feverous in his heat and agony, seem
Uncourteous, even he: but the meek maid
Sweetly forbore him ever, being to him
Meeker than any child to a rough nurse,
Milder than any mother to a sick child,
And never woman yet, since man's first fall,
Did kindlier unto man, but her deep love
Upbore her; till the hermit, skilled in all
The simples and the science of that time,
Told him that her fine care had saved his life.
And the sick man forgot her simple blush,
Would call her friend and sister, sweet Elaine,
Would listen for her coming and regret
Her parting step, and held her tenderly,
And loved her with all love except the love
Of man and woman when they love their best,
Closest and sweetest, and had died the death
In any knightly fashion for her sake.
And peradventure had he seen her first
She might have made this and that other world
Another world for the sick man; but now
The shackles of an old love straitened him,
His honour rooted in dishonour stood,
And faith unfaithful kept him falsely true.

Yet the great knight in his mid-sickness made
Full many a holy vow and pure resolve.
These, as but born of sickness, could not live:
For when the blood ran lustier in him again,
Full often the bright image of one face,
Making a treacherous quiet in his heart,
Dispersed his resolution like a cloud.
Then if the maiden, while that ghostly grace
Beamed on his fancy, spoke, he answered not,
Or short and coldly, and she knew right well
What the rough sickness meant, but what this meant
She knew not, and the sorrow dimmed her sight,
And drave her ere her time across the fields
Far into the rich city, where alone

She murmured, 'Vain, in vain: it cannot be.
He will not love me: how then? must I die?'
Then as a little helpless innocent bird,
That has but one plain passage of few notes,
Will sing the simple passage o'er and o'er
For all an April morning, till the ear
Wearies to hear it, so the simple maid
Went half the night repeating, 'Must I die?'
And now to right she turned, and now to left,
And found no ease in turning or in rest;
And 'Him or death,' she muttered, 'death or him,'
Again and like a burthen, 'Him or death.'

But when Sir Lancelot's deadly hurt was whole,
To Astolat returning rode the three.
There morn by morn, arraying her sweet self
In that wherein she deemed she looked her best,
She came before Sir Lancelot, for she thought
'If I be loved, these are my festal robes,
If not, the victim's flowers before he fall.'
And Lancelot ever prest upon the maid
That she should ask some goodly gift of him
For her own self or hers; 'and do not shun
To speak the wish most near to your true heart;
Such service have ye done me, that I make
My will of yours, and Prince and Lord am I
In mine own land, and what I will I can.'
Then like a ghost she lifted up her face,
But like a ghost without the power to speak.
And Lancelot saw that she withheld her wish,
And bode among them yet a little space
Till he should learn it; and one morn it chanced
He found her in among the garden yews,
And said, 'Delay no longer, speak your wish,
Seeing I go today:' then out she brake:
'Going? and we shall never see you more.
And I must die for want of one bold word.'
'Speak: that I live to hear,' he said, 'is yours.'
Then suddenly and passionately she spoke:
'I have gone mad. I love you: let me die.'
'Ah, sister,' answered Lancelot, 'what is this?'
And innocently extending her white arms,
'Your love,' she said, 'your love--to be your wife.'
And Lancelot answered, 'Had I chosen to wed,
I had been wedded earlier, sweet Elaine:
But now there never will be wife of mine.'

'No, no,' she cried, 'I care not to be wife,
But to be with you still, to see your face,
To serve you, and to follow you through the world.'
And Lancelot answered, 'Nay, the world, the world,
All ear and eye, with such a stupid heart
To interpret ear and eye, and such a tongue
To blare its own interpretation--nay,
Full ill then should I quit your brother's love,
And your good father's kindness.' And she said,
'Not to be with you, not to see your face--
Alas for me then, my good days are done.'
'Nay, noble maid,' he answered, 'ten times nay!
This is not love: but love's first flash in youth,
Most common: yea, I know it of mine own self:
And you yourself will smile at your own self
Hereafter, when you yield your flower of life
To one more fitly yours, not thrice your age:
And then will I, for true you are and sweet
Beyond mine old belief in womanhood,
More specially should your good knight be poor,
Endow you with broad land and territory
Even to the half my realm beyond the seas,
So that would make you happy: furthermore,
Even to the death, as though ye were my blood,
In all your quarrels will I be your knight.
This I will do, dear damsel, for your sake,
And more than this I cannot.'

While he spoke
She neither blushed nor shook, but deathly-pale
Stood grasping what was nearest, then replied:
'Of all this will I nothing;' and so fell,
And thus they bore her swooning to her tower.

Then spake, to whom through those black walls of yew
Their talk had pierced, her father: 'Ay, a flash,
I fear me, that will strike my blossom dead.
Too courteous are ye, fair Lord Lancelot.
I pray you, use some rough discourtesy
To blunt or break her passion.'
Lancelot said,
'That were against me: what I can I will;
And there that day remained, and toward even
Sent for his shield: full meekly rose the maid,
Stript off the case, and gave the naked shield;
Then, when she heard his horse upon the stones,

Unclasping flung the casement back, and looked
Down on his helm, from which her sleeve had gone.
And Lancelot knew the little clinking sound;
And she by tact of love was well aware
That Lancelot knew that she was looking at him.
And yet he glanced not up, nor waved his hand,
Nor bid farewell, but sadly rode away.
This was the one discourtesy that he used.

So in her tower alone the maiden sat:
His very shield was gone; only the case,
Her own poor work, her empty labour, left.
But still she heard him, still his picture formed
And grew between her and the pictured wall.
Then came her father, saying in low tones,
'Have comfort,' whom she greeted quietly.
Then came her brethren saying, 'Peace to thee,
Sweet sister,' whom she answered with all calm.
But when they left her to herself again,
Death, like a friend's voice from a distant field
Approaching through the darkness, called; the owls
Wailing had power upon her, and she mixt
Her fancies with the sorrow-rifted glooms
Of evening, and the moanings of the wind.

And in those days she made a little song,
And called her song 'The Song of Love and Death,'
And sang it: sweetly could she make and sing.

'Sweet is true love though given in vain, in vain;
And sweet is death who puts an end to pain:
I know not which is sweeter, no, not I.

'Love, art thou sweet? then bitter death must be:
Love, thou art bitter; sweet is death to me.
O Love, if death be sweeter, let me die.

'Sweet love, that seems not made to fade away,
Sweet death, that seems to make us loveless clay,
I know not which is sweeter, no, not I.

'I fain would follow love, if that could be;
I needs must follow death, who calls for me;
Call and I follow, I follow! let me die.'

High with the last line scaled her voice, and this,

All in a fiery dawning wild with wind
That shook her tower, the brothers heard, and thought
With shuddering, 'Hark the Phantom of the house
That ever shrieks before a death,' and called
The father, and all three in hurry and fear
Ran to her, and lo! the blood-red light of dawn
Flared on her face, she shrilling, 'Let me die!'

As when we dwell upon a word we know,
Repeating, till the word we know so well
Becomes a wonder, and we know not why,
So dwelt the father on her face, and thought
'Is this Elaine?' till back the maiden fell,
Then gave a languid hand to each, and lay,
Speaking a still good-morrow with her eyes.
At last she said, 'Sweet brothers, yesternight
I seemed a curious little maid again,
As happy as when we dwelt among the woods,
And when ye used to take me with the flood
Up the great river in the boatman's boat.
Only ye would not pass beyond the cape
That has the poplar on it: there ye fixt
Your limit, oft returning with the tide.
And yet I cried because ye would not pass
Beyond it, and far up the shining flood
Until we found the palace of the King.
And yet ye would not; but this night I dreamed
That I was all alone upon the flood,
And then I said, "Now shall I have my will:"
And there I woke, but still the wish remained.
So let me hence that I may pass at last
Beyond the poplar and far up the flood,
Until I find the palace of the King.
There will I enter in among them all,
And no man there will dare to mock at me;
But there the fine Gawain will wonder at me,
And there the great Sir Lancelot muse at me;
Gawain, who bad a thousand farewells to me,
Lancelot, who coldly went, nor bad me one:
And there the King will know me and my love,
And there the Queen herself will pity me,
And all the gentle court will welcome me,
And after my long voyage I shall rest!'

'Peace,' said her father, 'O my child, ye seem
Light-headed, for what force is yours to go

So far, being sick? and wherefore would ye look
On this proud fellow again, who scorns us all?'

Then the rough Torre began to heave and move,
And bluster into stormy sobs and say,
'I never loved him: an I meet with him,
I care not howsoever great he be,
Then will I strike at him and strike him down,
Give me good fortune, I will strike him dead,
For this discomfort he hath done the house.'

To whom the gentle sister made reply,
'Fret not yourself, dear brother, nor be wroth,
Seeing it is no more Sir Lancelot's fault
Not to love me, than it is mine to love
Him of all men who seems to me the highest.'

'Highest?' the father answered, echoing 'highest?'
(He meant to break the passion in her) 'nay,
Daughter, I know not what you call the highest;
But this I know, for all the people know it,
He loves the Queen, and in an open shame:
And she returns his love in open shame;
If this be high, what is it to be low?'

Then spake the lily maid of Astolat:
'Sweet father, all too faint and sick am I
For anger: these are slanders: never yet
Was noble man but made ignoble talk.
He makes no friend who never made a foe.
But now it is my glory to have loved
One peerless, without stain: so let me pass,
My father, howsoever I seem to you,
Not all unhappy, having loved God's best
And greatest, though my love had no return:
Yet, seeing you desire your child to live,
Thanks, but you work against your own desire;
For if I could believe the things you say
I should but die the sooner; wherefore cease,
Sweet father, and bid call the ghostly man
Hither, and let me shrive me clean, and die.'

So when the ghostly man had come and gone,
She with a face, bright as for sin forgiven,
Besought Lavaine to write as she devised
A letter, word for word; and when he asked

'Is it for Lancelot, is it for my dear lord?
Then will I bear it gladly;' she replied,
'For Lancelot and the Queen and all the world,
But I myself must bear it.' Then he wrote
The letter she devised; which being writ
And folded, 'O sweet father, tender and true,
Deny me not,' she said--'ye never yet
Denied my fancies--this, however strange,
My latest: lay the letter in my hand
A little ere I die, and close the hand
Upon it; I shall guard it even in death.
And when the heat is gone from out my heart,
Then take the little bed on which I died
For Lancelot's love, and deck it like the Queen's
For richness, and me also like the Queen
In all I have of rich, and lay me on it.
And let there be prepared a chariot-bier
To take me to the river, and a barge
Be ready on the river, clothed in black.
I go in state to court, to meet the Queen.
There surely I shall speak for mine own self,
And none of you can speak for me so well.
And therefore let our dumb old man alone
Go with me, he can steer and row, and he
Will guide me to that palace, to the doors.'

She ceased: her father promised; whereupon
She grew so cheerful that they deemed her death
Was rather in the fantasy than the blood.
But ten slow mornings past, and on the eleventh
Her father laid the letter in her hand,
And closed the hand upon it, and she died.
So that day there was dole in Astolat.

But when the next sun brake from underground,
Then, those two brethren slowly with bent brows
Accompanying, the sad chariot-bier
Past like a shadow through the field, that shone
Full-summer, to that stream whereon the barge,
Palled all its length in blackest samite, lay.
There sat the lifelong creature of the house,
Loyal, the dumb old servitor, on deck,
Winking his eyes, and twisted all his face.
So those two brethren from the chariot took
And on the black decks laid her in her bed,
Set in her hand a lily, o'er her hung

The silken case with braided blazonings,
And kissed her quiet brows, and saying to her
'Sister, farewell for ever,' and again
'Farewell, sweet sister,' parted all in tears.
Then rose the dumb old servitor, and the dead,
Oared by the dumb, went upward with the flood--
In her right hand the lily, in her left
The letter--all her bright hair streaming down--
And all the coverlid was cloth of gold
Drawn to her waist, and she herself in white
All but her face, and that clear-featured face
Was lovely, for she did not seem as dead,
But fast asleep, and lay as though she smiled.

That day Sir Lancelot at the palace craved
Audience of Guinevere, to give at last,
The price of half a realm, his costly gift,
Hard-won and hardly won with bruise and blow,
With deaths of others, and almost his own,
The nine-years-fought-for diamonds: for he saw
One of her house, and sent him to the Queen
Bearing his wish, whereto the Queen agreed
With such and so unmoved a majesty
She might have seemed her statue, but that he,
Low-drooping till he wellnigh kissed her feet
For loyal awe, saw with a sidelong eye
The shadow of some piece of pointed lace,
In the Queen's shadow, vibrate on the walls,
And parted, laughing in his courtly heart.

All in an oriel on the summer side,
Vine-clad, of Arthur's palace toward the stream,
They met, and Lancelot kneeling uttered, 'Queen,
Lady, my liege, in whom I have my joy,
Take, what I had not won except for you,
These jewels, and make me happy, making them
An armlet for the roundest arm on earth,
Or necklace for a neck to which the swan's
Is tawnier than her cygnet's: these are words:
Your beauty is your beauty, and I sin
In speaking, yet O grant my worship of it
Words, as we grant grief tears. Such sin in words
Perchance, we both can pardon: but, my Queen,
I hear of rumours flying through your court.
Our bond, as not the bond of man and wife,
Should have in it an absoluter trust

To make up that defect: let rumours be:
When did not rumours fly? these, as I trust
That you trust me in your own nobleness,
I may not well believe that you believe.'

While thus he spoke, half turned away, the Queen
Broke from the vast oriel-embowering vine
Leaf after leaf, and tore, and cast them off,
Till all the place whereon she stood was green;
Then, when he ceased, in one cold passive hand
Received at once and laid aside the gems
There on a table near her, and replied:

'It may be, I am quicker of belief
Than you believe me, Lancelot of the Lake.
Our bond is not the bond of man and wife.
This good is in it, whatsoe'er of ill,
It can be broken easier. I for you
This many a year have done despite and wrong
To one whom ever in my heart of hearts
I did acknowledge nobler. What are these?
Diamonds for me! they had been thrice their worth
Being your gift, had you not lost your own.
To loyal hearts the value of all gifts
Must vary as the giver's. Not for me!
For her! for your new fancy. Only this
Grant me, I pray you: have your joys apart.
I doubt not that however changed, you keep
So much of what is graceful: and myself
Would shun to break those bounds of courtesy
In which as Arthur's Queen I move and rule:
So cannot speak my mind. An end to this!
A strange one! yet I take it with Amen.
So pray you, add my diamonds to her pearls;
Deck her with these; tell her, she shines me down:
An armlet for an arm to which the Queen's
Is haggard, or a necklace for a neck
O as much fairer--as a faith once fair
Was richer than these diamonds--hers not mine--
Nay, by the mother of our Lord himself,
Or hers or mine, mine now to work my will--
She shall not have them.'

Saying which

she seized,
And, through the casement standing wide for heat,
Flung them, and down they flashed, and smote the stream.
Then from the smitten surface flashed, as it were,

Diamonds to meet them, and they past away.
Then while Sir Lancelot leant, in half disdain
At love, life, all things, on the window ledge,
Close underneath his eyes, and right across
Where these had fallen, slowly past the barge.
Whereon the lily maid of Astolat
Lay smiling, like a star in blackest night.

But the wild Queen, who saw not, burst away
To weep and wail in secret; and the barge,
On to the palace-doorway sliding, paused.
There two stood armed, and kept the door; to whom,
All up the marble stair, tier over tier,
Were added mouths that gaped, and eyes that asked
'What is it?' but that oarsman's haggard face,
As hard and still as is the face that men
Shape to their fancy's eye from broken rocks
On some cliff-side, appalled them, and they said
'He is enchanted, cannot speak--and she,
Look how she sleeps--the Fairy Queen, so fair!
Yea, but how pale! what are they? flesh and blood?
Or come to take the King to Fairyland?
For some do hold our Arthur cannot die,
But that he passes into Fairyland.'

While thus they babbled of the King, the King
Came girt with knights: then turned the tongueless man
From the half-face to the full eye, and rose
And pointed to the damsel, and the doors.
So Arthur bad the meek Sir Percivale
And pure Sir Galahad to uplift the maid;
And reverently they bore her into hall.
Then came the fine Gawain and wondered at her,
And Lancelot later came and mused at her,
And last the Queen herself, and pitied her:
But Arthur spied the letter in her hand,
Stooped, took, brake seal, and read it; this was all:

'Most noble lord, Sir Lancelot of the Lake,
I, sometime called the maid of Astolat,
Come, for you left me taking no farewell,
Hither, to take my last farewell of you.
I loved you, and my love had no return,
And therefore my true love has been my death.
And therefore to our Lady Guinevere,
And to all other ladies, I make moan:

Pray for my soul, and yield me burial.
Pray for my soul thou too, Sir Lancelot,
As thou art a knight peerless.'

Thus he read;
And ever in the reading, lords and dames
Wept, looking often from his face who read
To hers which lay so silent, and at times,
So touched were they, half-thinking that her lips,
Who had devised the letter, moved again.

Then freely spoke Sir Lancelot to them all:
'My lord liege Arthur, and all ye that hear,
Know that for this most gentle maiden's death
Right heavy am I; for good she was and true,
But loved me with a love beyond all love
In women, whomsoever I have known.
Yet to be loved makes not to love again;
Not at my years, however it hold in youth.
I swear by truth and knighthood that I gave
No cause, not willingly, for such a love:
To this I call my friends in testimony,
Her brethren, and her father, who himself
Besought me to be plain and blunt, and use,
To break her passion, some discourtesy
Against my nature: what I could, I did.
I left her and I bid her no farewell;
Though, had I dreamt the damsel would have died,
I might have put my wits to some rough use,
And helped her from herself.'

Then said the Queen
(Sea was her wrath, yet working after storm)
'Ye might at least have done her so much grace,
Fair lord, as would have helped her from her death.'
He raised his head, their eyes met and hers fell,
He adding,
'Queen, she would not be content
Save that I wedded her, which could not be.
Then might she follow me through the world, she asked;
It could not be. I told her that her love
Was but the flash of youth, would darken down
To rise hereafter in a stiller flame
Toward one more worthy of her--then would I,
More specially were he, she wedded, poor,
Estate them with large land and territory

In mine own realm beyond the narrow seas,
To keep them in all joyance: more than this
I could not; this she would not, and she died.'

He pausing, Arthur answered, 'O my knight,
It will be to thy worship, as my knight,
And mine, as head of all our Table Round,
To see that she be buried worshipfully.'

So toward that shrine which then in all the realm
Was richest, Arthur leading, slowly went
The marshalled Order of their Table Round,
And Lancelot sad beyond his wont, to see
The maiden buried, not as one unknown,
Nor meanly, but with gorgeous obsequies,
And mass, and rolling music, like a queen.
And when the knights had laid her comely head
Low in the dust of half-forgotten kings,
Then Arthur spake among them, 'Let her tomb
Be costly, and her image thereupon,
And let the shield of Lancelot at her feet
Be carven, and her lily in her hand.
And let the story of her dolorous voyage
For all true hearts be blazoned on her tomb
In letters gold and azure!' which was wrought
Thereafter; but when now the lords and dames
And people, from the high door streaming, brake
Disorderly, as homeward each, the Queen,
Who marked Sir Lancelot where he moved apart,
Drew near, and sighed in passing, 'Lancelot,
Forgive me; mine was jealousy in love.'
He answered with his eyes upon the ground,
'That is love's curse; pass on, my Queen, forgiven.'
But Arthur, who beheld his cloudy brows,
Approached him, and with full affection said,

'Lancelot, my Lancelot, thou in whom I have
Most joy and most affiance, for I know
What thou hast been in battle by my side,
And many a time have watched thee at the tilt
Strike down the lusty and long practised knight,
And let the younger and unskilled go by
To win his honour and to make his name,
And loved thy courtesies and thee, a man
Made to be loved; but now I would to God,
Seeing the homeless trouble in thine eyes,

Thou couldst have loved this maiden, shaped, it seems,
By God for thee alone, and from her face,
If one may judge the living by the dead,
Delicately pure and marvellously fair,
Who might have brought thee, now a lonely man
Wifeless and heirless, noble issue, sons
Born to the glory of thine name and fame,
My knight, the great Sir Lancelot of the Lake.'

Then answered Lancelot, 'Fair she was, my King,
Pure, as you ever wish your knights to be.
To doubt her fairness were to want an eye,
To doubt her pureness were to want a heart--
Yea, to be loved, if what is worthy love
Could bind him, but free love will not be bound.'

'Free love, so bound, were free still,' said the King.
'Let love be free; free love is for the best:
And, after heaven, on our dull side of death,
What should be best, if not so pure a love
Clothed in so pure a loveliness? yet thee
She failed to bind, though being, as I think,
Unbound as yet, and gentle, as I know.'

And Lancelot answered nothing, but he went,
And at the inrunning of a little brook
Sat by the river in a cove, and watched
The high reed wave, and lifted up his eyes
And saw the barge that brought her moving down,
Far-off, a blot upon the stream, and said
Low in himself, 'Ah simple heart and sweet,
Ye loved me, damsel, surely with a love
Far tenderer than my Queen's. Pray for thy soul?
Ay, that will I. Farewell too--now at last--
Farewell, fair lily. "Jealousy in love?"
Not rather dead love's harsh heir, jealous pride?
Queen, if I grant the jealousy as of love,
May not your crescent fear for name and fame
Speak, as it waxes, of a love that wanes?
Why did the King dwell on my name to me?
Mine own name shames me, seeming a reproach,
Lancelot, whom the Lady of the Lake
Caught from his mother's arms--the wondrous one
Who passes through the vision of the night--
She chanted snatches of mysterious hymns
Heard on the winding waters, eve and morn

She kissed me saying, "Thou art fair, my child,
As a king's son," and often in her arms
She bare me, pacing on the dusky mere.
Would she had drowned me in it, where'er it be!
For what am I? what profits me my name
Of greatest knight? I fought for it, and have it:
Pleasure to have it, none; to lose it, pain;
Now grown a part of me: but what use in it?
To make men worse by making my sin known?
Or sin seem less, the sinner seeming great?
Alas for Arthur's greatest knight, a man
Not after Arthur's heart! I needs must break
These bonds that so defame me: not without
She wills it: would I, if she willed it? nay,
Who knows? but if I would not, then may God,
I pray him, send a sudden Angel down
To seize me by the hair and bear me far,
And fling me deep in that forgotten mere,
Among the tumbled fragments of the hills.'

So groaned Sir Lancelot in remorseful pain,
Not knowing he should die a holy man.

The Holy Grail

From noisy arms, and acts of prowess done
In tournament or tilt, Sir Percivale,
Whom Arthur and his knighthood called The Pure,
Had passed into the silent life of prayer,
Praise, fast, and alms; and leaving for the cowl
The helmet in an abbey far away
From Camelot, there, and not long after, died.

And one, a fellow-monk among the rest,
Ambrosius, loved him much beyond the rest,
And honoured him, and wrought into his heart
A way by love that wakened love within,
To answer that which came: and as they sat
Beneath a world-old yew-tree, darkening half

The cloisters, on a gustful April morn
That puffed the swaying branches into smoke
Above them, ere the summer when he died
The monk Ambrosius questioned Percivale:

`O brother, I have seen this yew-tree smoke,
Spring after spring, for half a hundred years:
For never have I known the world without,
Nor ever strayed beyond the pale: but thee,
When first thou camest--such a courtesy
Spake through the limbs and in the voice--I knew
For one of those who eat in Arthur's hall;
For good ye are and bad, and like to coins,
Some true, some light, but every one of you
Stamped with the image of the King; and now
Tell me, what drove thee from the Table Round,
My brother? was it earthly passion crost?'

`Nay,' said the knight; `for no such passion mine.
But the sweet vision of the Holy Grail
Drove me from all vainglories, rivalries,
And earthly heats that spring and sparkle out
Among us in the jousts, while women watch
Who wins, who falls; and waste the spiritual strength
Within us, better offered up to Heaven.'

To whom the monk: `The Holy Grail!--I trust
We are green in Heaven's eyes; but here too much
We moulder--as to things without I mean--
Yet one of your own knights, a guest of ours,
Told us of this in our refectory,
But spake with such a sadness and so low
We heard not half of what he said. What is it?
The phantom of a cup that comes and goes?'

`Nay, monk! what phantom?' answered Percivale.
`The cup, the cup itself, from which our Lord
Drank at the last sad supper with his own.
This, from the blessed land of Aromat--
After the day of darkness, when the dead
Went wandering o'er Moriah--the good saint
Arimathan Joseph, journeying brought
To Glastonbury, where the winter thorn
Blossoms at Christmas, mindful of our Lord.
And there awhile it bode; and if a man
Could touch or see it, he was healed at once,

By faith, of all his ills. But then the times
Grew to such evil that the holy cup
Was caught away to Heaven, and disappeared.'

To whom the monk: 'From our old books I know
That Joseph came of old to Glastonbury,
And there the heathen Prince, Arviragus,
Gave him an isle of marsh whereon to build;
And there he built with wattles from the marsh
A little lonely church in days of yore,
For so they say, these books of ours, but seem
Mute of this miracle, far as I have read.
But who first saw the holy thing today?'

'A woman,' answered Percivale, 'a nun,
And one no further off in blood from me
Than sister; and if ever holy maid
With knees of adoration wore the stone,
A holy maid; though never maiden glowed,
But that was in her earlier maidenhood,
With such a fervent flame of human love,
Which being rudely blunted, glanced and shot
Only to holy things; to prayer and praise
She gave herself, to fast and alms. And yet,
Nun as she was, the scandal of the Court,
Sin against Arthur and the Table Round,
And the strange sound of an adulterous race,
Across the iron grating of her cell
Beat, and she prayed and fasted all the more.

'And he to whom she told her sins, or what
Her all but utter whiteness held for sin,
A man wellnigh a hundred winters old,
Spake often with her of the Holy Grail,
A legend handed down through five or six,
And each of these a hundred winters old,
From our Lord's time. And when King Arthur made
His Table Round, and all men's hearts became
Clean for a season, surely he had thought
That now the Holy Grail would come again;
But sin broke out. Ah, Christ, that it would come,
And heal the world of all their wickedness!
"O Father!" asked the maiden, "might it come
To me by prayer and fasting?" "Nay," said he,
"I know not, for thy heart is pure as snow."
And so she prayed and fasted, till the sun

Shone, and the wind blew, through her, and I thought
She might have risen and floated when I saw her.

`For on a day she sent to speak with me.
And when she came to speak, behold her eyes
Beyond my knowing of them, beautiful,
Beyond all knowing of them, wonderful,
Beautiful in the light of holiness.
And "O my brother Percivale," she said,
"Sweet brother, I have seen the Holy Grail:
For, waked at dead of night, I heard a sound
As of a silver horn from o'er the hills
Blown, and I thought, `It is not Arthur's use
To hunt by moonlight;' and the slender sound
As from a distance beyond distance grew
Coming upon me--O never harp nor horn,
Nor aught we blow with breath, or touch with hand,
Was like that music as it came; and then
Streamed through my cell a cold and silver beam,
And down the long beam stole the Holy Grail,
Rose-red with beatings in it, as if alive,
Till all the white walls of my cell were dyed
With rosy colours leaping on the wall;
And then the music faded, and the Grail
Past, and the beam decayed, and from the walls
The rosy quiverings died into the night.
So now the Holy Thing is here again
Among us, brother, fast thou too and pray,
And tell thy brother knights to fast and pray,
That so perchance the vision may be seen
By thee and those, and all the world be healed."

`Then leaving the pale nun, I spake of this
To all men; and myself fasted and prayed
Always, and many among us many a week
Fasted and prayed even to the uttermost,
Expectant of the wonder that would be.

`And one there was among us, ever moved
Among us in white armour, Galahad.
"God make thee good as thou art beautiful,"
Said Arthur, when he dubbed him knight; and none,
In so young youth, was ever made a knight
Till Galahad; and this Galahad, when he heard
My sister's vision, filled me with amaze;
His eyes became so like her own, they seemed

Hers, and himself her brother more than I.

`Sister or brother none had he; but some
Called him a son of Lancelot, and some said
Begotten by enchantment--chatterers they,
Like birds of passage piping up and down,
That gape for flies--we know not whence they come;
For when was Lancelot wanderingly lewd?

`But she, the wan sweet maiden, shore away
Clean from her forehead all that wealth of hair
Which made a silken mat-work for her feet;
And out of this she plaited broad and long
A strong sword-belt, and wove with silver thread
And crimson in the belt a strange device,
A crimson grail within a silver beam;
And saw the bright boy-knight, and bound it on him,
Saying, "My knight, my love, my knight of heaven,
O thou, my love, whose love is one with mine,
I, maiden, round thee, maiden, bind my belt.
Go forth, for thou shalt see what I have seen,
And break through all, till one will crown thee king
Far in the spiritual city:" and as she spake
She sent the deathless passion in her eyes
Through him, and made him hers, and laid her mind
On him, and he believed in her belief.

`Then came a year of miracle: O brother,
In our great hall there stood a vacant chair,
Fashioned by Merlin ere he past away,
And carven with strange figures; and in and out
The figures, like a serpent, ran a scroll
Of letters in a tongue no man could read.
And Merlin called it "The Siege perilous,"
Perilous for good and ill; "for there," he said,
"No man could sit but he should lose himself:"
And once by misadventure Merlin sat
In his own chair, and so was lost; but he,
Galahad, when he heard of Merlin's doom,
Cried, "If I lose myself, I save myself!"

`Then on a summer night it came to pass,
While the great banquet lay along the hall,
That Galahad would sit down in Merlin's chair.

`And all at once, as there we sat, we heard

A cracking and a riving of the roofs,
And rending, and a blast, and overhead
Thunder, and in the thunder was a cry.
And in the blast there smote along the hall
A beam of light seven times more clear than day:
And down the long beam stole the Holy Grail
All over covered with a luminous cloud.
And none might see who bare it, and it past.
But every knight beheld his fellow's face
As in a glory, and all the knights arose,
And staring each at other like dumb men
Stood, till I found a voice and sware a vow.

'I sware a vow before them all, that I,
Because I had not seen the Grail, would ride
A twelvemonth and a day in quest of it,
Until I found and saw it, as the nun
My sister saw it; and Galahad sware the vow,
And good Sir Bors, our Lancelot's cousin, sware,
And Lancelot sware, and many among the knights,
And Gawain sware, and louder than the rest.'

Then spake the monk Ambrosius, asking him,
'What said the King? Did Arthur take the vow?'

'Nay, for my lord,' said Percivale, 'the King,
Was not in hall: for early that same day,
Scaped through a cavern from a bandit hold,
An outraged maiden sprang into the hall
Crying on help: for all her shining hair
Was smeared with earth, and either milky arm
Red-rent with hooks of bramble, and all she wore
Torn as a sail that leaves the rope is torn
In tempest: so the King arose and went
To smoke the scandalous hive of those wild bees
That made such honey in his realm. Howbeit
Some little of this marvel he too saw,
Returning o'er the plain that then began
To darken under Camelot; whence the King
Looked up, calling aloud, "Lo, there! the roofs
Of our great hall are rolled in thunder-smoke!
Pray Heaven, they be not smitten by the bolt."
For dear to Arthur was that hall of ours,
As having there so oft with all his knights
Feasted, and as the stateliest under heaven.

`O brother, had you known our mighty hall,
Which Merlin built for Arthur long ago!
For all the sacred mount of Camelot,
And all the dim rich city, roof by roof,
Tower after tower, spire beyond spire,
By grove, and garden-lawn, and rushing brook,
Climbs to the mighty hall that Merlin built.
And four great zones of sculpture, set betwixt
With many a mystic symbol, gird the hall:
And in the lowest beasts are slaying men,
And in the second men are slaying beasts,
And on the third are warriors, perfect men,
And on the fourth are men with growing wings,
And over all one statue in the mould
Of Arthur, made by Merlin, with a crown,
And peaked wings pointed to the Northern Star.
And eastward fronts the statue, and the crown
And both the wings are made of gold, and flame
At sunrise till the people in far fields,
Wasted so often by the heathen hordes,
Behold it, crying, "We have still a King."

`And, brother, had you known our hall within,
Broader and higher than any in all the lands!
Where twelve great windows blazon Arthur's wars,
And all the light that falls upon the board
Streams through the twelve great battles of our King.
Nay, one there is, and at the eastern end,
Wealthy with wandering lines of mount and mere,
Where Arthur finds the brand Excalibur.
And also one to the west, and counter to it,
And blank: and who shall blazon it? when and how?--
O there, perchance, when all our wars are done,
The brand Excalibur will be cast away.

`So to this hall full quickly rode the King,
In horror lest the work by Merlin wrought,
Dreamlike, should on the sudden vanish, wrapt
In unremorseful folds of rolling fire.
And in he rode, and up I glanced, and saw
The golden dragon sparkling over all:
And many of those who burnt the hold, their arms
Hacked, and their foreheads grimed with smoke, and seared,
Followed, and in among bright faces, ours,
Full of the vision, prest: and then the King
Spake to me, being nearest, "Percivale,"

(Because the hall was all in tumult--some
Vowing, and some protesting), "what is this?"

`O brother, when I told him what had chanced,
My sister's vision, and the rest, his face
Darkened, as I have seen it more than once,
When some brave deed seemed to be done in vain,
Darken; and "Woe is me, my knights," he cried,
"Had I been here, ye had not sworn the vow."
Bold was mine answer, "Had thyself been here,
My King, thou wouldst have sworn." "Yea, yea," said he,
"Art thou so bold and hast not seen the Grail?"

`"Nay, lord, I heard the sound, I saw the light,
But since I did not see the Holy Thing,
I swear a vow to follow it till I saw."

`Then when he asked us, knight by knight, if any
Had seen it, all their answers were as one:
"Nay, lord, and therefore have we sworn our vows."

`"Lo now," said Arthur, "have ye seen a cloud?
What go ye into the wilderness to see?"

`Then Galahad on the sudden, and in a voice
Shrilling along the hall to Arthur, called,
"But I, Sir Arthur, saw the Holy Grail,
I saw the Holy Grail and heard a cry--
`O Galahad, and O Galahad, follow me."

`"Ah, Galahad, Galahad," said the King, "for such
As thou art is the vision, not for these.
Thy holy nun and thou have seen a sign--
Holier is none, my Percivale, than she--
A sign to maim this Order which I made.
But ye, that follow but the leader's bell"
(Brother, the King was hard upon his knights)
"Taliessin is our fullest throat of song,
And one hath sung and all the dumb will sing.
Lancelot is Lancelot, and hath overborne
Five knights at once, and every younger knight,
Unproven, holds himself as Lancelot,
Till overborne by one, he learns--and ye,
What are ye? Galahads?--no, nor Percivales"
(For thus it pleased the King to range me close
After Sir Galahad); "nay," said he, "but men

With strength and will to right the wronged, of power
To lay the sudden heads of violence flat,
Knights that in twelve great battles splashed and dyed
The strong White Horse in his own heathen blood--
But one hath seen, and all the blind will see.
Go, since your vows are sacred, being made:
Yet--for ye know the cries of all my realm
Pass through this hall--how often, O my knights,
Your places being vacant at my side,
This chance of noble deeds will come and go
Unchallenged, while ye follow wandering fires
Lost in the quagmire! Many of you, yea most,
Return no more: ye think I show myself
Too dark a prophet: come now, let us meet
The morrow morn once more in one full field
Of gracious pastime, that once more the King,
Before ye leave him for this Quest, may count
The yet-unbroken strength of all his knights,
Rejoicing in that Order which he made."

`So when the sun broke next from under ground,
All the great table of our Arthur closed
And clashed in such a tourney and so full,
So many lances broken--never yet
Had Camelot seen the like, since Arthur came;
And I myself and Galahad, for a strength
Was in us from this vision, overthrew
So many knights that all the people cried,
And almost burst the barriers in their heat,
Shouting, "Sir Galahad and Sir Percivale!"

`But when the next day brake from under ground--
O brother, had you known our Camelot,
Built by old kings, age after age, so old
The King himself had fears that it would fall,
So strange, and rich, and dim; for where the roofs
Tottered toward each other in the sky,
Met foreheads all along the street of those
Who watched us pass; and lower, and where the long
Rich galleries, lady-laden, weighed the necks
Of dragons clinging to the crazy walls,
Thicker than drops from thunder, showers of flowers
Fell as we past; and men and boys astride
On wyvern, lion, dragon, griffin, swan,
At all the corners, named us each by name,
Calling, "God speed!" but in the ways below

The knights and ladies wept, and rich and poor
Wept, and the King himself could hardly speak
For grief, and all in middle street the Queen,
Who rode by Lancelot, wailed and shrieked aloud,
"This madness has come on us for our sins."
So to the Gate of the three Queens we came,
Where Arthur's wars are rendered mystically,
And thence departed every one his way.

`And I was lifted up in heart, and thought
Of all my late-shown prowess in the lists,
How my strong lance had beaten down the knights,
So many and famous names; and never yet
Had heaven appeared so blue, nor earth so green,
For all my blood danced in me, and I knew
That I should light upon the Holy Grail.

`Thereafter, the dark warning of our King,
That most of us would follow wandering fires,
Came like a driving gloom across my mind.
Then every evil word I had spoken once,
And every evil thought I had thought of old,
And every evil deed I ever did,
Awoke and cried, "This Quest is not for thee."
And lifting up mine eyes, I found myself
Alone, and in a land of sand and thorns,
And I was thirsty even unto death;
And I, too, cried, "This Quest is not for thee."

`And on I rode, and when I thought my thirst
Would slay me, saw deep lawns, and then a brook,
With one sharp rapid, where the crisping white
Played ever back upon the sloping wave,
And took both ear and eye; and o'er the brook
Were apple-trees, and apples by the brook
Fallen, and on the lawns. "I will rest here,"
I said, "I am not worthy of the Quest;"
But even while I drank the brook, and ate
The goodly apples, all these things at once
Fell into dust, and I was left alone,
And thirsting, in a land of sand and thorns.

`And then behold a woman at a door
Spinning; and fair the house whereby she sat,
And kind the woman's eyes and innocent,
And all her bearing gracious; and she rose

Opening her arms to meet me, as who should say,
"Rest here;" but when I touched her, lo! she, too,
Fell into dust and nothing, and the house
Became no better than a broken shed,
And in it a dead babe; and also this
Fell into dust, and I was left alone.

`And on I rode, and greater was my thirst.
Then flashed a yellow gleam across the world,
And where it smote the plowshare in the field,
The plowman left his plowing, and fell down
Before it; where it glittered on her pail,
The milkmaid left her milking, and fell down
Before it, and I knew not why, but thought
"The sun is rising," though the sun had risen.
Then was I ware of one that on me moved
In golden armour with a crown of gold
About a casque all jewels; and his horse
In golden armour jewelled everywhere:
And on the splendour came, flashing me blind;
And seemed to me the Lord of all the world,
Being so huge. But when I thought he meant
To crush me, moving on me, lo! he, too,
Opened his arms to embrace me as he came,
And up I went and touched him, and he, too,
Fell into dust, and I was left alone
And wearying in a land of sand and thorns.

`And I rode on and found a mighty hill,
And on the top, a city walled: the spires
Pricked with incredible pinnacles into heaven.
And by the gateway stirred a crowd; and these
Cried to me climbing, "Welcome, Percivale!
Thou mightiest and thou purest among men!"
And glad was I and clomb, but found at top
No man, nor any voice. And thence I past
Far through a ruinous city, and I saw
That man had once dwelt there; but there I found
Only one man of an exceeding age.
"Where is that goodly company," said I,
"That so cried out upon me?" and he had
Scarce any voice to answer, and yet gasped,
"Whence and what art thou?" and even as he spoke
Fell into dust, and disappeared, and I
Was left alone once more, and cried in grief,
"Lo, if I find the Holy Grail itself

And touch it, it will crumble into dust."

`And thence I dropt into a lowly vale,
Low as the hill was high, and where the vale
Was lowest, found a chapel, and thereby
A holy hermit in a hermitage,
To whom I told my phantoms, and he said:

"O son, thou hast not true humility,
The highest virtue, mother of them all;
For when the Lord of all things made Himself
Naked of glory for His mortal change,
`Take thou my robe,' she said, `for all is thine,'
And all her form shone forth with sudden light
So that the angels were amazed, and she
Followed Him down, and like a flying star
Led on the gray-haired wisdom of the east;
But her thou hast not known: for what is this
Thou thoughtest of thy prowess and thy sins?
Thou hast not lost thyself to save thyself
As Galahad." When the hermit made an end,
In silver armour suddenly Galahad shone
Before us, and against the chapel door
Laid lance, and entered, and we knelt in prayer.
And there the hermit slaked my burning thirst,
And at the sacring of the mass I saw
The holy elements alone; but he,
"Saw ye no more? I, Galahad, saw the Grail,
The Holy Grail, descend upon the shrine:
I saw the fiery face as of a child
That smote itself into the bread, and went;
And hither am I come; and never yet
Hath what thy sister taught me first to see,
This Holy Thing, failed from my side, nor come
Covered, but moving with me night and day,
Fainter by day, but always in the night
Blood-red, and sliding down the blackened marsh
Blood-red, and on the naked mountain top
Blood-red, and in the sleeping mere below
Blood-red. And in the strength of this I rode,
Shattering all evil customs everywhere,
And past through Pagan realms, and made them mine,
And clashed with Pagan hordes, and bore them down,
And broke through all, and in the strength of this
Come victor. But my time is hard at hand,
And hence I go; and one will crown me king

Far in the spiritual city; and come thou, too,
For thou shalt see the vision when I go."

`While thus he spake, his eye, dwelling on mine,
Drew me, with power upon me, till I grew
One with him, to believe as he believed.
Then, when the day began to wane, we went.

`There rose a hill that none but man could climb,
Scarred with a hundred wintry water-courses--
Storm at the top, and when we gained it, storm
Round us and death; for every moment glanced
His silver arms and gloomed: so quick and thick
The lightnings here and there to left and right
Struck, till the dry old trunks about us, dead,
Yea, rotten with a hundred years of death,
Sprang into fire: and at the base we found
On either hand, as far as eye could see,
A great black swamp and of an evil smell,
Part black, part whitened with the bones of men,
Not to be crost, save that some ancient king
Had built a way, where, linked with many a bridge,
A thousand piers ran into the great Sea.
And Galahad fled along them bridge by bridge,
And every bridge as quickly as he crost
Sprang into fire and vanished, though I yearned
To follow; and thrice above him all the heavens
Opened and blazed with thunder such as seemed
Shoutings of all the sons of God: and first
At once I saw him far on the great Sea,
In silver-shining armour starry-clear;
And o'er his head the Holy Vessel hung
Clothed in white samite or a luminous cloud.
And with exceeding swiftness ran the boat,
If boat it were--I saw not whence it came.
And when the heavens opened and blazed again
Roaring, I saw him like a silver star--
And had he set the sail, or had the boat
Become a living creature clad with wings?
And o'er his head the Holy Vessel hung
Redder than any rose, a joy to me,
For now I knew the veil had been withdrawn.
Then in a moment when they blazed again
Opening, I saw the least of little stars
Down on the waste, and straight beyond the star
I saw the spiritual city and all her spires

And gateways in a glory like one pearl--
No larger, though the goal of all the saints--
Strike from the sea; and from the star there shot
A rose-red sparkle to the city, and there
Dwelt, and I knew it was the Holy Grail,
Which never eyes on earth again shall see.
Then fell the floods of heaven drowning the deep.
And how my feet recrost the deathful ridge
No memory in me lives; but that I touched
The chapel-doors at dawn I know; and thence
Taking my war-horse from the holy man,
Glad that no phantom vexed me more, returned
To whence I came, the gate of Arthur's wars.'

'O brother,' asked Ambrosius,--'for in sooth
These ancient books--and they would win thee--teem,
Only I find not there this Holy Grail,
With miracles and marvels like to these,
Not all unlike; which oftentime I read,
Who read but on my breviary with ease,
Till my head swims; and then go forth and pass
Down to the little thorpe that lies so close,
And almost plastered like a martin's nest
To these old walls--and mingle with our folk;
And knowing every honest face of theirs
As well as ever shepherd knew his sheep,
And every homely secret in their hearts,
Delight myself with gossip and old wives,
And ills and aches, and teething, lyings-in,
And mirthful sayings, children of the place,
That have no meaning half a league away:
Or lulling random squabbles when they rise,
Chafferings and chatterings at the market-cross,
Rejoice, small man, in this small world of mine,
Yea, even in their hens and in their eggs--
O brother, saving this Sir Galahad,
Came ye on none but phantoms in your quest,
No man, no woman?'

Then Sir Percivale:

'All men, to one so bound by such a vow,
And women were as phantoms. O, my brother,
Why wilt thou shame me to confess to thee
How far I faltered from my quest and vow?
For after I had lain so many nights
A bedmate of the snail and eft and snake,

In grass and burdock, I was changed to wan
And meagre, and the vision had not come;
And then I chanced upon a goodly town
With one great dwelling in the middle of it;
Thither I made, and there was I disarmed
By maidens each as fair as any flower:
But when they led me into hall, behold,
The Princess of that castle was the one,
Brother, and that one only, who had ever
Made my heart leap; for when I moved of old
A slender page about her father's hall,
And she a slender maiden, all my heart
Went after her with longing: yet we twain
Had never kissed a kiss, or vowed a vow.
And now I came upon her once again,
And one had wedded her, and he was dead,
And all his land and wealth and state were hers.
And while I tarried, every day she set
A banquet richer than the day before
By me; for all her longing and her will
Was toward me as of old; till one fair morn,
I walking to and fro beside a stream
That flashed across her orchard underneath
Her castle-walls, she stole upon my walk,
And calling me the greatest of all knights,
Embraced me, and so kissed me the first time,
And gave herself and all her wealth to me.
Then I remembered Arthur's warning word,
That most of us would follow wandering fires,
And the Quest faded in my heart. Anon,
The heads of all her people drew to me,
With supplication both of knees and tongue:
"We have heard of thee: thou art our greatest knight,
Our Lady says it, and we well believe:
Wed thou our Lady, and rule over us,
And thou shalt be as Arthur in our land."
O me, my brother! but one night my vow
Burnt me within, so that I rose and fled,
But wailed and wept, and hated mine own self,
And even the Holy Quest, and all but her;
Then after I was joined with Galahad
Cared not for her, nor anything upon earth.'

Then said the monk, `Poor men, when yule is cold,
Must be content to sit by little fires.
And this am I, so that ye care for me

Ever so little; yea, and blest be Heaven
That brought thee here to this poor house of ours
Where all the brethren are so hard, to warm
My cold heart with a friend: but O the pity
To find thine own first love once more--to hold,
Hold her a wealthy bride within thine arms,
Or all but hold, and then--cast her aside,
Foregoing all her sweetness, like a weed.
For we that want the warmth of double life,
We that are plagued with dreams of something sweet
Beyond all sweetness in a life so rich,--
Ah, blessed Lord, I speak too earthlywise,
Seeing I never strayed beyond the cell,
But live like an old badger in his earth,
With earth about him everywhere, despite
All fast and penance. Saw ye none beside,
None of your knights?'

 'Yea so,' said Percivale:
`One night my pathway swerving east, I saw
The pelican on the casque of our Sir Bors
All in the middle of the rising moon:
And toward him spurred, and hailed him, and he me,
And each made joy of either; then he asked,
"Where is he? hast thou seen him--Lancelot?--Once,"
Said good Sir Bors, "he dashed across me--mad,
And maddening what he rode: and when I cried,
`Ridest thou then so hotly on a quest
So holy,' Lancelot shouted, `Stay me not!
I have been the sluggard, and I ride apace,
For now there is a lion in the way.'
So vanished."

 `Then Sir Bors had ridden on
Softly, and sorrowing for our Lancelot,
Because his former madness, once the talk
And scandal of our table, had returned;
For Lancelot's kith and kin so worship him
That ill to him is ill to them; to Bors
Beyond the rest: he well had been content
Not to have seen, so Lancelot might have seen,
The Holy Cup of healing; and, indeed,
Being so clouded with his grief and love,
Small heart was his after the Holy Quest:
If God would send the vision, well: if not,
The Quest and he were in the hands of Heaven.

`And then, with small adventure met, Sir Bors
Rode to the lonest tract of all the realm,
And found a people there among their crags,
Our race and blood, a remnant that were left
Paynim amid their circles, and the stones
They pitch up straight to heaven: and their wise men
Were strong in that old magic which can trace
The wandering of the stars, and scoffed at him
And this high Quest as at a simple thing:
Told him he followed--almost Arthur's words--
A mocking fire: "what other fire than he,
Whereby the blood beats, and the blossom blows,
And the sea rolls, and all the world is warmed?"
And when his answer chafed them, the rough crowd,
Hearing he had a difference with their priests,
Seized him, and bound and plunged him into a cell
Of great piled stones; and lying bounden there
In darkness through innumerable hours
He heard the hollow-ringing heavens sweep
Over him till by miracle--what else?--
Heavy as it was, a great stone slipt and fell,
Such as no wind could move: and through the gap
Glimmered the streaming scud: then came a night
Still as the day was loud; and through the gap
The seven clear stars of Arthur's Table Round--
For, brother, so one night, because they roll
Through such a round in heaven, we named the stars,
Rejoicing in ourselves and in our King--
And these, like bright eyes of familiar friends,
In on him shone: "And then to me, to me,"
Said good Sir Bors, "beyond all hopes of mine,
Who scarce had prayed or asked it for myself--
Across the seven clear stars--O grace to me--
In colour like the fingers of a hand
Before a burning taper, the sweet Grail
Glided and past, and close upon it pealed
A sharp quick thunder." Afterwards, a maid,
Who kept our holy faith among her kin
In secret, entering, loosed and let him go.'

To whom the monk: `And I remember now
That pelican on the casque: Sir Bors it was
Who spake so low and sadly at our board;
And mighty reverent at our grace was he:
A square-set man and honest; and his eyes,

An out-door sign of all the warmth within,
Smiled with his lips--a smile beneath a cloud,
But heaven had meant it for a sunny one:
Ay, ay, Sir Bors, who else? But when ye reached
The city, found ye all your knights returned,
Or was there sooth in Arthur's prophecy,
Tell me, and what said each, and what the King?

Then answered Percivale: `And that can I,
Brother, and truly; since the living words
Of so great men as Lancelot and our King
Pass not from door to door and out again,
But sit within the house. O, when we reached
The city, our horses stumbling as they trode
On heaps of ruin, hornless unicorns,
Cracked basilisks, and splintered cockatrices,
And shattered talbots, which had left the stones
Raw, that they fell from, brought us to the hall.

`And there sat Arthur on the das-throne,
And those that had gone out upon the Quest,
Wasted and worn, and but a tithe of them,
And those that had not, stood before the King,
Who, when he saw me, rose, and bad me hail,
Saying, "A welfare in thine eye reproves
Our fear of some disastrous chance for thee
On hill, or plain, at sea, or flooding ford.
So fierce a gale made havoc here of late
Among the strange devices of our kings;
Yea, shook this newer, stronger hall of ours,
And from the statue Merlin moulded for us
Half-wrenched a golden wing; but now--the Quest,
This vision--hast thou seen the Holy Cup,
That Joseph brought of old to Glastonbury?"

`So when I told him all thyself hast heard,
Ambrosius, and my fresh but fixt resolve
To pass away into the quiet life,
He answered not, but, sharply turning, asked
Of Gawain, "Gawain, was this Quest for thee?"

`"Nay, lord," said Gawain, "not for such as I.
Therefore I communed with a saintly man,
Who made me sure the Quest was not for me;
For I was much aweared of the Quest:
But found a silk pavilion in a field,

And merry maidens in it; and then this gale
Tore my pavilion from the tenting-pin,
And blew my merry maidens all about
With all discomfort; yea, and but for this,
My twelvemonth and a day were pleasant to me."

`He ceased; and Arthur turned to whom at first
He saw not, for Sir Bors, on entering, pushed
Athwart the throng to Lancelot, caught his hand,
Held it, and there, half-hidden by him, stood,
Until the King espied him, saying to him,
"Hail, Bors! if ever loyal man and true
Could see it, thou hast seen the Grail;" and Bors,
"Ask me not, for I may not speak of it:
I saw it;" and the tears were in his eyes.

`Then there remained but Lancelot, for the rest
Spake but of sundry perils in the storm;
Perhaps, like him of Cana in Holy Writ,
Our Arthur kept his best until the last;
"Thou, too, my Lancelot," asked the king, "my friend,
Our mightiest, hath this Quest availed for thee?"

`"Our mightiest!" answered Lancelot, with a groan;
"O King!"--and when he paused, methought I spied
A dying fire of madness in his eyes--
"O King, my friend, if friend of thine I be,
Happier are those that welter in their sin,
Swine in the mud, that cannot see for slime,
Slime of the ditch: but in me lived a sin
So strange, of such a kind, that all of pure,
Noble, and knightly in me twined and clung
Round that one sin, until the wholesome flower
And poisonous grew together, each as each,
Not to be plucked asunder; and when thy knights
Swore, I swore with them only in the hope
That could I touch or see the Holy Grail
They might be plucked asunder. Then I spake
To one most holy saint, who wept and said,
That save they could be plucked asunder, all
My quest were but in vain; to whom I vowed
That I would work according as he willed.
And forth I went, and while I yearned and strove
To tear the twain asunder in my heart,
My madness came upon me as of old,
And whipt me into waste fields far away;

There was I beaten down by little men,
Mean knights, to whom the moving of my sword
And shadow of my spear had been enow
To scare them from me once; and then I came
All in my folly to the naked shore,
Wide flats, where nothing but coarse grasses grew;
But such a blast, my King, began to blow,
So loud a blast along the shore and sea,
Ye could not hear the waters for the blast,
Though heapt in mounds and ridges all the sea
Drove like a cataract, and all the sand
Swept like a river, and the clouded heavens
Were shaken with the motion and the sound.
And blackening in the sea-foam swayed a boat,
Half-swallowed in it, anchored with a chain;
And in my madness to myself I said,
'I will embark and I will lose myself,
And in the great sea wash away my sin.'
I burst the chain, I sprang into the boat.
Seven days I drove along the dreary deep,
And with me drove the moon and all the stars;
And the wind fell, and on the seventh night
I heard the shingle grinding in the surge,
And felt the boat shock earth, and looking up,
Behold, the enchanted towers of Carbonek,
A castle like a rock upon a rock,
With chasm-like portals open to the sea,
And steps that met the breaker! there was none
Stood near it but a lion on each side
That kept the entry, and the moon was full.
Then from the boat I leapt, and up the stairs.
There drew my sword. With sudden-flaring manes
Those two great beasts rose upright like a man,
Each gript a shoulder, and I stood between;
And, when I would have smitten them, heard a voice,
'Doubt not, go forward; if thou doubt, the beasts
Will tear thee piecemeal.' Then with violence
The sword was dashed from out my hand, and fell.
And up into the sounding hall I past;
But nothing in the sounding hall I saw,
No bench nor table, painting on the wall
Or shield of knight; only the rounded moon
Through the tall oriel on the rolling sea.
But always in the quiet house I heard,
Clear as a lark, high o'er me as a lark,
A sweet voice singing in the topmost tower

To the eastward: up I climbed a thousand steps
With pain: as in a dream I seemed to climb
For ever: at the last I reached a door,
A light was in the crannies, and I heard,
`Glory and joy and honour to our Lord
And to the Holy Vessel of the Grail.'
Then in my madness I essayed the door;
It gave; and through a stormy glare, a heat
As from a seventimes-heated furnace, I,
Blasted and burnt, and blinded as I was,
With such a fierceness that I swooned away--
O, yet methought I saw the Holy Grail,
All palled in crimson samite, and around
Great angels, awful shapes, and wings and eyes.
And but for all my madness and my sin,
And then my swooning, I had sworn I saw
That which I saw; but what I saw was veiled
And covered; and this Quest was not for me."

`So speaking, and here ceasing, Lancelot left
The hall long silent, till Sir Gawain--nay,
Brother, I need not tell thee foolish words,--
A reckless and irreverent knight was he,
Now boldened by the silence of his King,--
Well, I will tell thee: "O King, my liege," he said,
"Hath Gawain failed in any quest of thine?
When have I stinted stroke in foughten field?
But as for thine, my good friend Percivale,
Thy holy nun and thou have driven men mad,
Yea, made our mightiest madder than our least.
But by mine eyes and by mine ears I swear,
I will be deafer than the blue-eyed cat,
And thrice as blind as any noonday owl,
To holy virgins in their ecstasies,
Henceforward."

 `"Deafer," said the blameless King,
"Gawain, and blinder unto holy things
Hope not to make thyself by idle vows,
Being too blind to have desire to see.
But if indeed there came a sign from heaven,
Blessd are Bors, Lancelot and Percivale,
For these have seen according to their sight.
For every fiery prophet in old times,
And all the sacred madness of the bard,
When God made music through them, could but speak

His music by the framework and the chord;
And as ye saw it ye have spoken truth.

`"Nay--but thou errest, Lancelot: never yet
Could all of true and noble in knight and man
Twine round one sin, whatever it might be,
With such a closeness, but apart there grew,
Save that he were the swine thou spakest of,
Some root of knighthood and pure nobleness;
Whereto see thou, that it may bear its flower.

`"And spake I not too truly, O my knights?
Was I too dark a prophet when I said
To those who went upon the Holy Quest,
That most of them would follow wandering fires,
Lost in the quagmire?--lost to me and gone,
And left me gazing at a barren board,
And a lean Order--scarce returned a tithe--
And out of those to whom the vision came
My greatest hardly will believe he saw;
Another hath beheld it afar off,
And leaving human wrongs to right themselves,
Cares but to pass into the silent life.
And one hath had the vision face to face,
And now his chair desires him here in vain,
However they may crown him elsewhere.

`"And some among you held, that if the King
Had seen the sight he would have sworn the vow:
Not easily, seeing that the King must guard
That which he rules, and is but as the hind
To whom a space of land is given to plow.
Who may not wander from the allotted field
Before his work be done; but, being done,
Let visions of the night or of the day
Come, as they will; and many a time they come,
Until this earth he walks on seems not earth,
This light that strikes his eyeball is not light,
This air that smites his forehead is not air
But vision--yea, his very hand and foot--
In moments when he feels he cannot die,
And knows himself no vision to himself,
Nor the high God a vision, nor that One
Who rose again: ye have seen what ye have seen."

`So spake the King: I knew not all he meant.'

Pelleas and Ettarre

King Arthur made new knights to fill the gap
Left by the Holy Quest; and as he sat
In hall at old Caerleon, the high doors
Were softly sundered, and through these a youth,
Pelleas, and the sweet smell of the fields
Past, and the sunshine came along with him.

'Make me thy knight, because I know, Sir King,
All that belongs to knighthood, and I love.'
Such was his cry: for having heard the King
Had let proclaim a tournament--the prize
A golden circlet and a knightly sword,
Full fain had Pelleas for his lady won
The golden circlet, for himself the sword:
And there were those who knew him near the King,
And promised for him: and Arthur made him knight.

And this new knight, Sir Pelleas of the isles--
But lately come to his inheritance,
And lord of many a barren isle was he--
Riding at noon, a day or twain before,
Across the forest called of Dean, to find
Caerleon and the King, had felt the sun
Beat like a strong knight on his helm, and reeled
Almost to falling from his horse; but saw
Near him a mound of even-sloping side,
Whereon a hundred stately beeches grew,
And here and there great hollies under them;
But for a mile all round was open space,
And fern and heath: and slowly Pelleas drew
To that dim day, then binding his good horse
To a tree, cast himself down; and as he lay
At random looking over the brown earth
Through that green-glooming twilight of the grove,
It seemed to Pelleas that the fern without
Burnt as a living fire of emeralds,

So that his eyes were dazzled looking at it.
Then o'er it crost the dimness of a cloud
Floating, and once the shadow of a bird
Flying, and then a fawn; and his eyes closed.
And since he loved all maidens, but no maid
In special, half-awake he whispered, 'Where?
O where? I love thee, though I know thee not.
For fair thou art and pure as Guinevere,
And I will make thee with my spear and sword
As famous--O my Queen, my Guinevere,
For I will be thine Arthur when we meet.'

Suddenly wakened with a sound of talk
And laughter at the limit of the wood,
And glancing through the hoary boles, he saw,
Strange as to some old prophet might have seemed
A vision hovering on a sea of fire,
Damsels in divers colours like the cloud
Of sunset and sunrise, and all of them
On horses, and the horses richly trapt
Breast-high in that bright line of bracken stood:
And all the damsels talked confusedly,
And one was pointing this way, and one that,
Because the way was lost.

And Pelleas rose,
And loosed his horse, and led him to the light.
There she that seemed the chief among them said,
'In happy time behold our pilot-star!
Youth, we are damsels-errant, and we ride,
Armed as ye see, to tilt against the knights
There at Caerleon, but have lost our way:
To right? to left? straight forward? back again?
Which? tell us quickly.'

Pelleas gazing thought,
'Is Guinevere herself so beautiful?'
For large her violet eyes looked, and her bloom
A rosy dawn kindled in stainless heavens,
And round her limbs, mature in womanhood;
And slender was her hand and small her shape;
And but for those large eyes, the haunts of scorn,
She might have seemed a toy to trifle with,
And pass and care no more. But while he gazed
The beauty of her flesh abashed the boy,
As though it were the beauty of her soul:

For as the base man, judging of the good,
Puts his own baseness in him by default
Of will and nature, so did Pelleas lend
All the young beauty of his own soul to hers,
Believing her; and when she spake to him,
Stammered, and could not make her a reply.
For out of the waste islands had he come,
Where saving his own sisters he had known
Scarce any but the women of his isles,
Rough wives, that laughed and screamed against the gulls,
Makers of nets, and living from the sea.

Then with a slow smile turned the lady round
And looked upon her people; and as when
A stone is flung into some sleeping tarn,
The circle widens till it lip the marge,
Spread the slow smile through all her company.
Three knights were thereamong; and they too smiled,
Scorning him; for the lady was Ettarre,
And she was a great lady in her land.

Again she said, 'O wild and of the woods,
Knowest thou not the fashion of our speech?
Or have the Heavens but given thee a fair face,
Lacking a tongue?'

'O damsel,' answered he,
'I woke from dreams; and coming out of gloom
Was dazzled by the sudden light, and crave
Pardon: but will ye to Caerleon? I
Go likewise: shall I lead you to the King?'

'Lead then,' she said; and through the woods they went.
And while they rode, the meaning in his eyes,
His tenderness of manner, and chaste awe,
His broken utterances and bashfulness,
Were all a burthen to her, and in her heart
She muttered, 'I have lighted on a fool,
Raw, yet so stale!' But since her mind was bent
On hearing, after trumpet blown, her name
And title, 'Queen of Beauty,' in the lists
Cried--and beholding him so strong, she thought
That peradventure he will fight for me,
And win the circlet: therefore flattered him,
Being so gracious, that he wellnigh deemed
His wish by hers was echoed; and her knights

And all her damsels too were gracious to him,
For she was a great lady.

And when they reached
Caerleon, ere they past to lodging, she,
Taking his hand, 'O the strong hand,' she said,
'See! look at mine! but wilt thou fight for me,
And win me this fine circlet, Pelleas,
That I may love thee?'

Then his helpless heart
Leapt, and he cried, 'Ay! wilt thou if I win?'
'Ay, that will I,' she answered, and she laughed,
And straitly nipt the hand, and flung it from her;
Then glanced askew at those three knights of hers,
Till all her ladies laughed along with her.

'O happy world,' thought Pelleas, 'all, meseems,
Are happy; I the happiest of them all.'
Nor slept that night for pleasure in his blood,
And green wood-ways, and eyes among the leaves;
Then being on the morrow knighted, sware
To love one only. And as he came away,
The men who met him rounded on their heels
And wondered after him, because his face
Shone like the countenance of a priest of old
Against the flame about a sacrifice
Kindled by fire from heaven: so glad was he.

Then Arthur made vast banquets, and strange knights
From the four winds came in: and each one sat,
Though served with choice from air, land, stream, and sea,
Oft in mid-banquet measuring with his eyes
His neighbour's make and might: and Pelleas looked
Noble among the noble, for he dreamed
His lady loved him, and he knew himself
Loved of the King: and him his new-made knight
Worshipt, whose lightest whisper moved him more
Than all the rangd reasons of the world.

Then blushed and brake the morning of the jousts,
And this was called 'The Tournament of Youth.'
For Arthur, loving his young knight, withheld
His older and his mightier from the lists,
That Pelleas might obtain his lady's love,
According to her promise, and remain

Lord of the tourney. And Arthur had the jousts
Down in the flat field by the shore of Usk
Holden: the gilded parapets were crowned
With faces, and the great tower filled with eyes
Up to the summit, and the trumpets blew.
There all day long Sir Pelleas kept the field
With honour: so by that strong hand of his
The sword and golden circlet were achieved.

Then rang the shout his lady loved: the heat
Of pride and glory fired her face; her eye
Sparkled; she caught the circlet from his lance,
And there before the people crowned herself:
So for the last time she was gracious to him.

Then at Caerleon for a space--her look
Bright for all others, cloudier on her knight--
Lingered Ettarre: and seeing Pelleas droop,
Said Guinevere, 'We marvel at thee much,
O damsel, wearing this unsunny face
To him who won thee glory!' And she said,
'Had ye not held your Lancelot in your bower,
My Queen, he had not won.' Whereat the Queen,
As one whose foot is bitten by an ant,
Glanced down upon her, turned and went her way.

But after, when her damsels, and herself,
And those three knights all set their faces home,
Sir Pelleas followed. She that saw him cried,
'Damsels--and yet I should be shamed to say it--
I cannot bide Sir Baby. Keep him back
Among yourselves. Would rather that we had
Some rough old knight who knew the worldly way,
Albeit grizzlier than a bear, to ride
And jest with: take him to you, keep him off,
And pamper him with papmeat, if ye will,
Old milky fables of the wolf and sheep,
Such as the wholesome mothers tell their boys.
Nay, should ye try him with a merry one
To find his mettle, good: and if he fly us,
Small matter! let him.' This her damsels heard,
And mindful of her small and cruel hand,
They, closing round him through the journey home,
Acted her hest, and always from her side
Restrained him with all manner of device,
So that he could not come to speech with her.

And when she gained her castle, upsprang the bridge,
Down rang the grate of iron through the groove,
And he was left alone in open field.

`These be the ways of ladies,' Pelleas thought,
`To those who love them, trials of our faith.
Yea, let her prove me to the uttermost,
For loyal to the uttermost am I.'
So made his moan; and darkness falling, sought
A priory not far off, there lodged, but rose
With morning every day, and, moist or dry,
Full-armed upon his charger all day long
Sat by the walls, and no one opened to him.

And this persistence turned her scorn to wrath.
Then calling her three knights, she charged them, `Out!
And drive him from the walls.' And out they came
But Pelleas overthrew them as they dashed
Against him one by one; and these returned,
But still he kept his watch beneath the wall.

Thereon her wrath became a hate; and once,
A week beyond, while walking on the walls
With her three knights, she pointed downward, `Look,
He haunts me--I cannot breathe--besieges me;
Down! strike him! put my hate into your strokes,
And drive him from my walls.' And down they went,
And Pelleas overthrew them one by one;
And from the tower above him cried Ettarre,
`Bind him, and bring him in.'

He heard her voice;
Then let the strong hand, which had overthrown
Her minion-knights, by those he overthrew
Be bounden straight, and so they brought him in.

Then when he came before Ettarre, the sight
Of her rich beauty made him at one glance
More bondsman in his heart than in his bonds.
Yet with good cheer he spake, `Behold me, Lady,
A prisoner, and the vassal of thy will;
And if thou keep me in thy donjon here,
Content am I so that I see thy face
But once a day: for I have sworn my vows,
And thou hast given thy promise, and I know
That all these pains are trials of my faith,

And that thyself, when thou hast seen me strained
And sifted to the utmost, wilt at length
Yield me thy love and know me for thy knight.'

Then she began to rail so bitterly,
With all her damsels, he was stricken mute;
But when she mocked his vows and the great King,
Lighted on words: 'For pity of thine own self,
Peace, Lady, peace: is he not thine and mine?'
'Thou fool,' she said, 'I never heard his voice
But longed to break away. Unbind him now,
And thrust him out of doors; for save he be
Fool to the midmost marrow of his bones,
He will return no more.' And those, her three,
Laughed, and unbound, and thrust him from the gate.

And after this, a week beyond, again
She called them, saying, 'There he watches yet,
There like a dog before his master's door!
Kicked, he returns: do ye not hate him, ye?
Ye know yourselves: how can ye bide at peace,
Affronted with his fulsome innocence?
Are ye but creatures of the board and bed,
No men to strike? Fall on him all at once,
And if ye slay him I reckon not: if ye fail,
Give ye the slave mine order to be bound,
Bind him as heretofore, and bring him in:
It may be ye shall slay him in his bonds.'

She spake; and at her will they couched their spears,
Three against one: and Gawain passing by,
Bound upon solitary adventure, saw
Low down beneath the shadow of those towers
A villainy, three to one: and through his heart
The fire of honour and all noble deeds
Flashed, and he called, 'I strike upon thy side--
The caitiffs!' 'Nay,' said Pelleas, 'but forbear;
He needs no aid who doth his lady's will.'

So Gawain, looking at the villainy done,
Forbore, but in his heat and eagerness
Trembled and quivered, as the dog, withheld
A moment from the vermin that he sees
Before him, shivers, ere he springs and kills.

And Pelleas overthrew them, one to three;

And they rose up, and bound, and brought him in.
Then first her anger, leaving Pelleas, burned
Full on her knights in many an evil name
Of craven, weakling, and thrice-beaten hound:
`Yet, take him, ye that scarce are fit to touch,
Far less to bind, your victor, and thrust him out,
And let who will release him from his bonds.
And if he comes again'--there she brake short;
And Pelleas answered, `Lady, for indeed
I loved you and I deemed you beautiful,
I cannot brook to see your beauty marred
Through evil spite: and if ye love me not,
I cannot bear to dream you so forsworn:
I had liefer ye were worthy of my love,
Than to be loved again of you--farewell;
And though ye kill my hope, not yet my love,
Vex not yourself: ye will not see me more.'

While thus he spake, she gazed upon the man
Of princely bearing, though in bonds, and thought,
`Why have I pushed him from me? this man loves,
If love there be: yet him I loved not. Why?
I deemed him fool? yea, so? or that in him
A something--was it nobler than myself?
Seemed my reproach? He is not of my kind.
He could not love me, did he know me well.
Nay, let him go--and quickly.' And her knights
Laughed not, but thrust him bounden out of door.

Forth sprang Gawain, and loosed him from his bonds,
And flung them o'er the walls; and afterward,
Shaking his hands, as from a lazar's rag,
`Faith of my body,' he said, `and art thou not--
Yea thou art he, whom late our Arthur made
Knight of his table; yea and he that won
The circlet? wherefore hast thou so defamed
Thy brotherhood in me and all the rest,
As let these caitiffs on thee work their will?'

And Pelleas answered, `O, their wills are hers
For whom I won the circlet; and mine, hers,
Thus to be bounden, so to see her face,
Marred though it be with spite and mockery now,
Other than when I found her in the woods;
And though she hath me bounden but in spite,
And all to flout me, when they bring me in,

Let me be bounden, I shall see her face;
Else must I die through mine unhappiness.'

And Gawain answered kindly though in scorn,
`Why, let my lady bind me if she will,
And let my lady beat me if she will:
But an she send her delegate to thrall
These fighting hands of mine--Christ kill me then
But I will slice him handless by the wrist,
And let my lady sear the stump for him,
Howl as he may. But hold me for your friend:
Come, ye know nothing: here I pledge my troth,
Yea, by the honour of the Table Round,
I will be leal to thee and work thy work,
And tame thy jailing princess to thine hand.
Lend me thine horse and arms, and I will say
That I have slain thee. She will let me in
To hear the manner of thy fight and fall;
Then, when I come within her counsels, then
From prime to vespers will I chant thy praise
As prowtest knight and truest lover, more
Than any have sung thee living, till she long
To have thee back in lusty life again,
Not to be bound, save by white bonds and warm,
Dearer than freedom. Wherefore now thy horse
And armour: let me go: be comforted:
Give me three days to melt her fancy, and hope
The third night hence will bring thee news of gold.'

Then Pelleas lent his horse and all his arms,
Saving the goodly sword, his prize, and took
Gawain's, and said, `Betray me not, but help--
Art thou not he whom men call light-of-love?'

`Ay,' said Gawain, `for women be so light.'
Then bounded forward to the castle walls,
And raised a bugle hanging from his neck,
And winded it, and that so musically
That all the old echoes hidden in the wall
Rang out like hollow woods at hunting-tide.

Up ran a score of damsels to the tower;
`Avaunt,' they cried, `our lady loves thee not.'
But Gawain lifting up his vizor said,
`Gawain am I, Gawain of Arthur's court,
And I have slain this Pelleas whom ye hate:

Behold his horse and armour. Open gates,
And I will make you merry.'

And down they ran,
Her damsels, crying to their lady, 'Lo!
Pelleas is dead--he told us--he that hath
His horse and armour: will ye let him in?
He slew him! Gawain, Gawain of the court,
Sir Gawain--there he waits below the wall,
Blowing his bugle as who should say him nay.'

And so, leave given, straight on through open door
Rode Gawain, whom she greeted courteously.
'Dead, is it so?' she asked. 'Ay, ay,' said he,
'And oft in dying cried upon your name.'
'Pity on him,' she answered, 'a good knight,
But never let me bide one hour at peace.'
'Ay,' thought Gawain, 'and you be fair enow:
But I to your dead man have given my troth,
That whom ye loathe, him will I make you love.'

So those three days, aimless about the land,
Lost in a doubt, Pelleas wandering
Waited, until the third night brought a moon
With promise of large light on woods and ways.

Hot was the night and silent; but a sound
Of Gawain ever coming, and this lay--
Which Pelleas had heard sung before the Queen,
And seen her sadden listening--vext his heart,
And marred his rest--'A worm within the rose.'

'A rose, but one, none other rose had I,
A rose, one rose, and this was wondrous fair,
One rose, a rose that gladdened earth and sky,
One rose, my rose, that sweetened all mine air--
I cared not for the thorns; the thorns were there.

'One rose, a rose to gather by and by,
One rose, a rose, to gather and to wear,
No rose but one--what other rose had I?
One rose, my rose; a rose that will not die,--
He dies who loves it,--if the worm be there.'

This tender rhyme, and evermore the doubt,
'Why lingers Gawain with his golden news?'

So shook him that he could not rest, but rode
Ere midnight to her walls, and bound his horse
Hard by the gates. Wide open were the gates,
And no watch kept; and in through these he past,
And heard but his own steps, and his own heart
Beating, for nothing moved but his own self,
And his own shadow. Then he crost the court,
And spied not any light in hall or bower,
But saw the postern portal also wide
Yawning; and up a slope of garden, all
Of roses white and red, and brambles mixt
And overgrowing them, went on, and found,
Here too, all hushed below the mellow moon,
Save that one rivulet from a tiny cave
Came lightening downward, and so spilt itself
Among the roses, and was lost again.

Then was he ware of three pavilions reared
Above the bushes, gilden-peakt: in one,
Red after revel, droned her lurdane knights
Slumbering, and their three squires across their feet:
In one, their malice on the placid lip
Frozen by sweet sleep, four of her damsels lay:
And in the third, the circlet of the jousts
Bound on her brow, were Gawain and Ettarre.

Back, as a hand that pushes through the leaf
To find a nest and feels a snake, he drew:
Back, as a coward slinks from what he fears
To cope with, or a traitor proven, or hound
Beaten, did Pelleas in an utter shame
Creep with his shadow through the court again,
Fingering at his sword-handle until he stood
There on the castle-bridge once more, and thought,
'I will go back, and slay them where they lie.'

And so went back, and seeing them yet in sleep
Said, 'Ye, that so dishallow the holy sleep,
Your sleep is death,' and drew the sword, and thought,
'What! slay a sleeping knight? the King hath bound
And sworn me to this brotherhood;' again,
'Alas that ever a knight should be so false.'
Then turned, and so returned, and groaning laid
The naked sword athwart their naked throats,
There left it, and them sleeping; and she lay,
The circlet of her tourney round her brows,

And the sword of the tourney across her throat.

And forth he past, and mounting on his horse
Stared at her towers that, larger than themselves
In their own darkness, thronged into the moon.
Then crushed the saddle with his thighs, and clenched
His hands, and maddened with himself and moaned:

`Would they have risen against me in their blood
At the last day? I might have answered them
Even before high God. O towers so strong,
Huge, solid, would that even while I gaze
The crack of earthquake shivering to your base
Split you, and Hell burst up your harlot roofs
Bellowing, and charred you through and through within,
Black as the harlot's heart--hollow as a skull!
Let the fierce east scream through your eyelet-holes,
And whirl the dust of harlots round and round
In dung and nettles! hiss, snake--I saw him there--
Let the fox bark, let the wolf yell. Who yells
Here in the still sweet summer night, but I--
I, the poor Pelleas whom she called her fool?
Fool, beast--he, she, or I? myself most fool;
Beast too, as lacking human wit--disgraced,
Dishonoured all for trial of true love--
Love?--we be all alike: only the King
Hath made us fools and liars. O noble vows!
O great and sane and simple race of brutes
That own no lust because they have no law!
For why should I have loved her to my shame?
I loathe her, as I loved her to my shame.
I never loved her, I but lusted for her--
Away--'

He dashed the rowel into his horse,
And bounded forth and vanished through the night.

Then she, that felt the cold touch on her throat,
Awaking knew the sword, and turned herself
To Gawain: `Liar, for thou hast not slain
This Pelleas! here he stood, and might have slain
Me and thyself.' And he that tells the tale
Says that her ever-veering fancy turned
To Pelleas, as the one true knight on earth,
And only lover; and through her love her life
Wasted and pined, desiring him in vain.

But he by wild and way, for half the night,
And over hard and soft, striking the sod
From out the soft, the spark from off the hard,
Rode till the star above the wakening sun,
Beside that tower where Percivale was cowed,
Glanced from the rosy forehead of the dawn.
For so the words were flashed into his heart
He knew not whence or wherefore: `O sweet star,
Pure on the virgin forehead of the dawn!
And there he would have wept, but felt his eyes
Harder and drier than a fountain bed
In summer: thither came the village girls
And lingered talking, and they come no more
Till the sweet heavens have filled it from the heights
Again with living waters in the change
Of seasons: hard his eyes; harder his heart
Seemed; but so weary were his limbs, that he,
Gasping, `Of Arthur's hall am I, but here,
Here let me rest and die,' cast himself down,
And gulfed his griefs in inmost sleep; so lay,
Till shaken by a dream, that Gawain fired
The hall of Merlin, and the morning star
Reeled in the smoke, brake into flame, and fell.

He woke, and being ware of some one nigh,
Sent hands upon him, as to tear him, crying,
`False! and I held thee pure as Guinevere.'

But Percivale stood near him and replied,
`Am I but false as Guinevere is pure?
Or art thou mazed with dreams? or being one
Of our free-spoken Table hast not heard
That Lancelot'--there he checked himself and paused.

Then fared it with Sir Pelleas as with one
Who gets a wound in battle, and the sword
That made it plunges through the wound again,
And pricks it deeper: and he shrank and wailed,
`Is the Queen false?' and Percivale was mute.
`Have any of our Round Table held their vows?'
And Percivale made answer not a word.
`Is the King true?' `The King!' said Percivale.
`Why then let men couple at once with wolves.
What! art thou mad?'

But Pelleas, leaping up,

Ran through the doors and vaulted on his horse
And fled: small pity upon his horse had he,
Or on himself, or any, and when he met
A cripple, one that held a hand for alms--
Hunched as he was, and like an old dwarf-elm
That turns its back upon the salt blast, the boy
Paused not, but overrode him, shouting, `False,
And false with Gawain!' and so left him bruised
And battered, and fled on, and hill and wood
Went ever streaming by him till the gloom,
That follows on the turning of the world,
Darkened the common path: he twitched the reins,
And made his beast that better knew it, swerve
Now off it and now on; but when he saw
High up in heaven the hall that Merlin built,
Blackening against the dead-green stripes of even,
`Black nest of rats,' he groaned, `ye build too high.'

Not long thereafter from the city gates
Issued Sir Lancelot riding airily,
Warm with a gracious parting from the Queen,
Peace at his heart, and gazing at a star
And marvelling what it was: on whom the boy,
Across the silent seeded meadow-grass
Borne, clashed: and Lancelot, saying, `What name hast thou
That ridest here so blindly and so hard?'
`No name, no name,' he shouted, `a scourge am I
To lash the treasons of the Table Round.'
`Yea, but thy name?' `I have many names,' he cried:
`I am wrath and shame and hate and evil fame,
And like a poisonous wind I pass to blast
And blaze the crime of Lancelot and the Queen.'
`First over me,' said Lancelot, `shalt thou pass.'
`Fight therefore,' yelled the youth, and either knight
Drew back a space, and when they closed, at once
The weary steed of Pelleas floundering flung
His rider, who called out from the dark field,
`Thou art as false as Hell: slay me: I have no sword.'
Then Lancelot, `Yea, between thy lips--and sharp;
But here I will disedge it by thy death.'
`Slay then,' he shrieked, `my will is to be slain,'
And Lancelot, with his heel upon the fallen,
Rolling his eyes, a moment stood, then spake:
`Rise, weakling; I am Lancelot; say thy say.'

And Lancelot slowly rode his warhorse back

To Camelot, and Sir Pelleas in brief while
Caught his unbroken limbs from the dark field,
And followed to the city. It chanced that both
Brake into hall together, worn and pale.
There with her knights and dames was Guinevere.
Full wonderingly she gazed on Lancelot
So soon returned, and then on Pelleas, him
Who had not greeted her, but cast himself
Down on a bench, hard-breathing. `Have ye fought?'
She asked of Lancelot. `Ay, my Queen,' he said.
`And hast thou overthrown him?' `Ay, my Queen.'
Then she, turning to Pelleas, `O young knight,
Hath the great heart of knighthood in thee failed
So far thou canst not bide, unfrowardly,
A fall from HIM?' Then, for he answered not,
`Or hast thou other griefs? If I, the Queen,
May help them, loose thy tongue, and let me know.'
But Pelleas lifted up an eye so fierce
She quailed; and he, hissing `I have no sword,'
Sprang from the door into the dark. The Queen
Looked hard upon her lover, he on her;
And each foresaw the dolorous day to be:
And all talk died, as in a grove all song
Beneath the shadow of some bird of prey;
Then a long silence came upon the hall,
And Modred thought, `The time is hard at hand.'

The Last Tournament

Dagonet, the fool, whom Gawain in his mood
Had made mock-knight of Arthur's Table Round,
At Camelot, high above the yellowing woods,
Danced like a withered leaf before the hall.
And toward him from the hall, with harp in hand,
And from the crown thereof a carcanet
Of ruby swaying to and fro, the prize
Of Tristram in the jousts of yesterday,
Came Tristram, saying, `Why skip ye so, Sir Fool?'

For Arthur and Sir Lancelot riding once
Far down beneath a winding wall of rock
Heard a child wail. A stump of oak half-dead,
From roots like some black coil of carved snakes,
Clutched at the crag, and started through mid air
Bearing an eagle's nest: and through the tree
Rushed ever a rainy wind, and through the wind
Pierced ever a child's cry: and crag and tree
Scaling, Sir Lancelot from the perilous nest,
This ruby necklace thrice around her neck,
And all unscarred from beak or talon, brought
A maiden babe; which Arthur pitying took,
Then gave it to his Queen to rear: the Queen
But coldly acquiescing, in her white arms
Received, and after loved it tenderly,
And named it Nestling; so forgot herself
A moment, and her cares; till that young life
Being smitten in mid heaven with mortal cold
Past from her; and in time the carcanet
Vext her with plaintive memories of the child:
So she, delivering it to Arthur, said,
'Take thou the jewels of this dead innocence,
And make them, an thou wilt, a tourney-prize.'

To whom the King, 'Peace to thine eagle-borne
Dead nestling, and this honour after death,
Following thy will! but, O my Queen, I muse
Why ye not wear on arm, or neck, or zone
Those diamonds that I rescued from the tarn,
And Lancelot won, methought, for thee to wear.'

'Would rather you had let them fall,' she cried,
'Plunge and be lost--ill-fated as they were,
A bitterness to me!--ye look amazed,
Not knowing they were lost as soon as given--
Slid from my hands, when I was leaning out
Above the river--that unhappy child
Past in her barge: but rosier luck will go
With these rich jewels, seeing that they came
Not from the skeleton of a brother-slayer,
But the sweet body of a maiden babe.
Perchance--who knows?--the purest of thy knights
May win them for the purest of my maids.'

She ended, and the cry of a great jousts
With trumpet-blowings ran on all the ways

From Camelot in among the faded fields
To furthest towers; and everywhere the knights
Armed for a day of glory before the King.

But on the hither side of that loud morn
Into the hall staggered, his visage ribbed
From ear to ear with dogwhip-weals, his nose
Bridge-broken, one eye out, and one hand off,
And one with shattered fingers dangling lame,
A churl, to whom indignantly the King,

`My churl, for whom Christ died, what evil beast
Hath drawn his claws athwart thy face? or fiend?
Man was it who marred heaven's image in thee thus?'

Then, sputtering through the hedge of splintered teeth,
Yet strangers to the tongue, and with blunt stump
Pitch-blackened sawing the air, said the maimed churl,

`He took them and he drave them to his tower--
Some hold he was a table-knight of thine--
A hundred goodly ones--the Red Knight, he--
Lord, I was tending swine, and the Red Knight
Brake in upon me and drave them to his tower;
And when I called upon thy name as one
That doest right by gentle and by churl,
Maimed me and mauled, and would outright have slain,
Save that he sware me to a message, saying,
"Tell thou the King and all his liars, that I
Have founded my Round Table in the North,
And whatsoever his own knights have sworn
My knights have sworn the counter to it--and say
My tower is full of harlots, like his court,
But mine are worthier, seeing they profess
To be none other than themselves--and say
My knights are all adulterers like his own,
But mine are truer, seeing they profess
To be none other; and say his hour is come,
The heathen are upon him, his long lance
Broken, and his Excalibur a straw."'

Then Arthur turned to Kay the seneschal,
`Take thou my churl, and tend him curiously
Like a king's heir, till all his hurts be whole.
The heathen--but that ever-climbing wave,
Hurled back again so often in empty foam,

Hath lain for years at rest--and renegades,
Thieves, bandits, leavings of confusion, whom
The wholesome realm is purged of otherwhere,
Friends, through your manhood and your fealty,--now
Make their last head like Satan in the North.
My younger knights, new-made, in whom your flower
Waits to be solid fruit of golden deeds,
Move with me toward their quelling, which achieved,
The loneliest ways are safe from shore to shore.
But thou, Sir Lancelot, sitting in my place
Enchained tomorrow, arbitrate the field;
For wherefore shouldst thou care to mingle with it,
Only to yield my Queen her own again?
Speak, Lancelot, thou art silent: is it well?'

Thereto Sir Lancelot answered, 'It is well:
Yet better if the King abide, and leave
The leading of his younger knights to me.
Else, for the King has willed it, it is well.'

Then Arthur rose and Lancelot followed him,
And while they stood without the doors, the King
Turned to him saying, 'Is it then so well?
Or mine the blame that oft I seem as he
Of whom was written, "A sound is in his ears"?
The foot that loiters, bidden go,--the glance
That only seems half-loyal to command,--
A manner somewhat fallen from reverence--
Or have I dreamed the bearing of our knights
Tells of a manhood ever less and lower?
Or whence the fear lest this my realm, upreared,
By noble deeds at one with noble vows,
From flat confusion and brute violences,
Reel back into the beast, and be no more?'

He spoke, and taking all his younger knights,
Down the slope city rode, and sharply turned
North by the gate. In her high bower the Queen,
Working a tapestry, lifted up her head,
Watched her lord pass, and knew not that she sighed.
Then ran across her memory the strange rhyme
Of bygone Merlin, 'Where is he who knows?
From the great deep to the great deep he goes.'

But when the morning of a tournament,
By these in earnest those in mockery called

The Tournament of the Dead Innocence,
Brake with a wet wind blowing, Lancelot,
Round whose sick head all night, like birds of prey,
The words of Arthur flying shrieked, arose,
And down a streetway hung with folds of pure
White samite, and by fountains running wine,
Where children sat in white with cups of gold,
Moved to the lists, and there, with slow sad steps
Ascending, filled his double-dragon chair.

He glanced and saw the stately galleries,
Dame, damsel, each through worship of their Queen
White-robed in honour of the stainless child,
And some with scattered jewels, like a bank
Of maiden snow mingled with sparks of fire.
He looked but once, and veiled his eyes again.

The sudden trumpet sounded as in a dream
To ears but half-awaked, then one low roll
Of Autumn thunder, and the jousts began:
And ever the wind blew, and yellowing leaf
And gloom and gleam, and shower and shorn plume
Went down it. Sighing weariedly, as one
Who sits and gazes on a faded fire,
When all the goodlier guests are past away,
Sat their great umpire, looking o'er the lists.
He saw the laws that ruled the tournament
Broken, but spake not; once, a knight cast down
Before his throne of arbitration cursed
The dead babe and the follies of the King;
And once the laces of a helmet cracked,
And showed him, like a vermin in its hole,
Modred, a narrow face: anon he heard
The voice that billowed round the barriers roar
An ocean-sounding welcome to one knight,
But newly-entered, taller than the rest,
And armoured all in forest green, whereon
There tript a hundred tiny silver deer,
And wearing but a holly-spray for crest,
With ever-scattering berries, and on shield
A spear, a harp, a bugle--Tristram--late
From overseas in Brittany returned,
And marriage with a princess of that realm,
Isolt the White--Sir Tristram of the Woods--
Whom Lancelot knew, had held sometime with pain
His own against him, and now yearned to shake

The burthen off his heart in one full shock
With Tristram even to death: his strong hands gript
And dinted the gilt dragons right and left,
Until he groaned for wrath--so many of those,
That ware their ladies' colours on the casque,
Drew from before Sir Tristram to the bounds,
And there with gibes and flickering mockeries
Stood, while he muttered, 'Craven crests! O shame!
What faith have these in whom they sware to love?
The glory of our Round Table is no more.'

So Tristram won, and Lancelot gave, the gems,
Not speaking other word than 'Hast thou won?
Art thou the purest, brother? See, the hand
Wherewith thou takest this, is red!' to whom
Tristram, half plagued by Lancelot's languorous mood,
Made answer, 'Ay, but wherefore toss me this
Like a dry bone cast to some hungry hound?
Lest be thy fair Queen's fantasy. Strength of heart
And might of limb, but mainly use and skill,
Are winners in this pastime of our King.
My hand--belike the lance hath dript upon it--
No blood of mine, I trow; but O chief knight,
Right arm of Arthur in the battlefield,
Great brother, thou nor I have made the world;
Be happy in thy fair Queen as I in mine.'

And Tristram round the gallery made his horse
Caracole; then bowed his homage, bluntly saying,
'Fair damsels, each to him who worships each
Sole Queen of Beauty and of love, behold
This day my Queen of Beauty is not here.'
And most of these were mute, some angered, one
Murmuring, 'All courtesy is dead,' and one,
'The glory of our Round Table is no more.'

Then fell thick rain, plume droopt and mantle clung,
And pettish cries awoke, and the wan day
Went glooming down in wet and weariness:
But under her black brows a swarthy one
Laughed shrilly, crying, 'Praise the patient saints,
Our one white day of Innocence hath past,
Though somewhat draggled at the skirt. So be it.
The snowdrop only, flowering through the year,
Would make the world as blank as Winter-tide.
Come--let us gladden their sad eyes, our Queen's

And Lancelot's, at this night's solemnity
With all the kindlier colours of the field.'

So dame and damsel glittered at the feast
Variously gay: for he that tells the tale
Likened them, saying, as when an hour of cold
Falls on the mountain in midsummer snows,
And all the purple slopes of mountain flowers
Pass under white, till the warm hour returns
With veer of wind, and all are flowers again;
So dame and damsel cast the simple white,
And glowing in all colours, the live grass,
Rose-campion, bluebell, kingcup, poppy, glanced
About the revels, and with mirth so loud
Beyond all use, that, half-amazed, the Queen,
And wroth at Tristram and the lawless jousts,
Brake up their sports, then slowly to her bower
Parted, and in her bosom pain was lord.

And little Dagonet on the morrow morn,
High over all the yellowing Autumn-tide,
Danced like a withered leaf before the hall.
Then Tristram saying, 'Why skip ye so, Sir Fool?'
Wheeled round on either heel, Dagonet replied,
'Belike for lack of wiser company;
Or being fool, and seeing too much wit
Makes the world rotten, why, belike I skip
To know myself the wisest knight of all.'
'Ay, fool,' said Tristram, 'but 'tis eating dry
To dance without a catch, a roundelay
To dance to.' Then he twangled on his harp,
And while he twangled little Dagonet stood
Quiet as any water-sodden log
Stayed in the wandering warble of a brook;
But when the twangling ended, skipt again;
And being asked, 'Why skipt ye not, Sir Fool?'
Made answer, 'I had liefer twenty years
Skip to the broken music of my brains
Than any broken music thou canst make.'
Then Tristram, waiting for the quip to come,
'Good now, what music have I broken, fool?'
And little Dagonet, skipping, 'Arthur, the King's;
For when thou playest that air with Queen Isolt,
Thou makest broken music with thy bride,
Her daintier namesake down in Brittany--
And so thou breakest Arthur's music too.'

`Save for that broken music in thy brains,
Sir Fool,' said Tristram, `I would break thy head.
Fool, I came too late, the heathen wars were o'er,
The life had flown, we sware but by the shell--
I am but a fool to reason with a fool--
Come, thou art crabbed and sour: but lean me down,
Sir Dagonet, one of thy long asses' ears,
And harken if my music be not true.

"Free love--free field--we love but while we may:
The woods are hushed, their music is no more:
The leaf is dead, the yearning past away:
New leaf, new life--the days of frost are o'er:
New life, new love, to suit the newer day:
New loves are sweet as those that went before:
Free love--free field--we love but while we may."

`Ye might have moved slow-measure to my tune,
Not stood stockstill. I made it in the woods,
And heard it ring as true as tested gold.'

But Dagonet with one foot poised in his hand,
`Friend, did ye mark that fountain yesterday
Made to run wine?--but this had run itself
All out like a long life to a sour end--
And them that round it sat with golden cups
To hand the wine to whosoever came--
The twelve small damosels white as Innocence,
In honour of poor Innocence the babe,
Who left the gems which Innocence the Queen
Lent to the King, and Innocence the King
Gave for a prize--and one of those white slips
Handed her cup and piped, the pretty one,
"Drink, drink, Sir Fool," and thereupon I drank,
Spat--pish--the cup was gold, the draught was mud.'

And Tristram, `Was it muddier than thy gibes?
Is all the laughter gone dead out of thee?--
Not marking how the knighthood mock thee, fool--
"Fear God: honour the King--his one true knight--
Sole follower of the vows"--for here be they
Who knew thee swine enow before I came,
Smuttier than blasted grain: but when the King
Had made thee fool, thy vanity so shot up
It frightened all free fool from out thy heart;
Which left thee less than fool, and less than swine,

A naked aught--yet swine I hold thee still,
For I have flung thee pearls and find thee swine.'

And little Dagonet mincing with his feet,
`Knight, an ye fling those rubies round my neck
In lieu of hers, I'll hold thou hast some touch
Of music, since I care not for thy pearls.
Swine? I have wallowed, I have washed--the world
Is flesh and shadow--I have had my day.
The dirty nurse, Experience, in her kind
Hath fouled me--an I wallowed, then I washed--
I have had my day and my philosophies--
And thank the Lord I am King Arthur's fool.
Swine, say ye? swine, goats, asses, rams and geese
Trooped round a Paynim harper once, who thrummed
On such a wire as musically as thou
Some such fine song--but never a king's fool.'

And Tristram, `Then were swine, goats, asses, geese
The wiser fools, seeing thy Paynim bard
Had such a mastery of his mystery
That he could harp his wife up out of hell.'

Then Dagonet, turning on the ball of his foot,
`And whither harp'st thou thine? down! and thyself
Down! and two more: a helpful harper thou,
That harpest downward! Dost thou know the star
We call the harp of Arthur up in heaven?'

And Tristram, `Ay, Sir Fool, for when our King
Was victor wellnigh day by day, the knights,
Glorying in each new glory, set his name
High on all hills, and in the signs of heaven.'

And Dagonet answered, `Ay, and when the land
Was freed, and the Queen false, ye set yourself
To babble about him, all to show your wit--
And whether he were King by courtesy,
Or King by right--and so went harping down
The black king's highway, got so far, and grew
So witty that ye played at ducks and drakes
With Arthur's vows on the great lake of fire.
Tuwhoo! do ye see it? do ye see the star?'

`Nay, fool,' said Tristram, `not in open day.'
And Dagonet, `Nay, nor will: I see it and hear.

It makes a silent music up in heaven,
And I, and Arthur and the angels hear,
And then we skip.' `Lo, fool,' he said, `ye talk
Fool's treason: is the King thy brother fool?'
Then little Dagonet clapt his hands and shrilled,
`Ay, ay, my brother fool, the king of fools!
Conceits himself as God that he can make
Figs out of thistles, silk from bristles, milk
From burning spurge, honey from hornet-combs,
And men from beasts--Long live the king of fools!'

And down the city Dagonet danced away;
But through the slowly-mellowing avenues
And solitary passes of the wood
Rode Tristram toward Lyonesse and the west.
Before him fled the face of Queen Isolt
With ruby-circled neck, but evermore
Past, as a rustle or twitter in the wood
Made dull his inner, keen his outer eye
For all that walked, or crept, or perched, or flew.
Anon the face, as, when a gust hath blown,
Unruffling waters re-collect the shape
Of one that in them sees himself, returned;
But at the slot or fewmets of a deer,
Or even a fallen feather, vanished again.

So on for all that day from lawn to lawn
Through many a league-long bower he rode. At length
A lodge of intertwined beechen-boughs
Furze-crammed, and bracken-rooft, the which himself
Built for a summer day with Queen Isolt
Against a shower, dark in the golden grove
Appearing, sent his fancy back to where
She lived a moon in that low lodge with him:
Till Mark her lord had past, the Cornish King,
With six or seven, when Tristram was away,
And snatched her thence; yet dreading worse than shame
Her warrior Tristram, spake not any word,
But bode his hour, devising wretchedness.

And now that desert lodge to Tristram lookt
So sweet, that halting, in he past, and sank
Down on a drift of foliage random-blown;
But could not rest for musing how to smoothe
And sleek his marriage over to the Queen.
Perchance in lone Tintagil far from all

The tonguesters of the court she had not heard.
But then what folly had sent him overseas
After she left him lonely here? a name?
Was it the name of one in Brittany,
Isolt, the daughter of the King? `Isolt
Of the white hands' they called her: the sweet name
Allured him first, and then the maid herself,
Who served him well with those white hands of hers,
And loved him well, until himself had thought
He loved her also, wedded easily,
But left her all as easily, and returned.
The black-blue Irish hair and Irish eyes
Had drawn him home--what marvel? then he laid
His brows upon the drifted leaf and dreamed.

He seemed to pace the strand of Brittany
Between Isolt of Britain and his bride,
And showed them both the ruby-chain, and both
Began to struggle for it, till his Queen
Graspt it so hard, that all her hand was red.
Then cried the Breton, `Look, her hand is red!
These be no rubies, this is frozen blood,
And melts within her hand--her hand is hot
With ill desires, but this I gave thee, look,
Is all as cool and white as any flower.'
Followed a rush of eagle's wings, and then
A whimpering of the spirit of the child,
Because the twain had spoiled her carcanet.

He dreamed; but Arthur with a hundred spears
Rode far, till o'er the illimitable reed,
And many a glancing plash and sallowy isle,
The wide-winged sunset of the misty marsh
Glared on a huge machicolated tower
That stood with open doors, whereout was rolled
A roar of riot, as from men secure
Amid their marshes, ruffians at their ease
Among their harlot-brides, an evil song.
`Lo there,' said one of Arthur's youth, for there,
High on a grim dead tree before the tower,
A goodly brother of the Table Round
Swung by the neck: and on the boughs a shield
Showing a shower of blood in a field noir,
And therebeside a horn, inflamed the knights
At that dishonour done the gilded spur,
Till each would clash the shield, and blow the horn.

But Arthur waved them back. Alone he rode.
Then at the dry harsh roar of the great horn,
That sent the face of all the marsh aloft
An ever upward-rushing storm and cloud
Of shriek and plume, the Red Knight heard, and all,
Even to tipmost lance and topmost helm,
In blood-red armour sallying, howled to the King,

`The teeth of Hell flay bare and gnash thee flat!--
Lo! art thou not that eunuch-hearted King
Who fain had clipt free manhood from the world--
The woman-worshipper? Yea, God's curse, and I!
Slain was the brother of my paramour
By a knight of thine, and I that heard her whine
And snivel, being eunuch-hearted too,
Sware by the scorpion-worm that twists in hell,
And stings itself to everlasting death,
To hang whatever knight of thine I fought
And tumbled. Art thou King? --Look to thy life!

He ended: Arthur knew the voice; the face
Wellnigh was helmet-hidden, and the name
Went wandering somewhere darkling in his mind.
And Arthur deigned not use of word or sword,
But let the drunkard, as he stretched from horse
To strike him, overbalancing his bulk,
Down from the causeway heavily to the swamp
Fall, as the crest of some slow-arching wave,
Heard in dead night along that table-shore,
Drops flat, and after the great waters break
Whitening for half a league, and thin themselves,
Far over sands marbled with moon and cloud,
From less and less to nothing; thus he fell
Head-heavy; then the knights, who watched him, roared
And shouted and leapt down upon the fallen;
There trampled out his face from being known,
And sank his head in mire, and slimed themselves:
Nor heard the King for their own cries, but sprang
Through open doors, and swording right and left
Men, women, on their sodden faces, hurled
The tables over and the wines, and slew
Till all the rafters rang with woman-yells,
And all the pavement streamed with massacre:
Then, echoing yell with yell, they fired the tower,
Which half that autumn night, like the live North,
Red-pulsing up through Alioth and Alcor,

Made all above it, and a hundred meres
About it, as the water Moab saw
Came round by the East, and out beyond them flushed
The long low dune, and lazy-plunging sea.

So all the ways were safe from shore to shore,
But in the heart of Arthur pain was lord.

Then, out of Tristram waking, the red dream
Fled with a shout, and that low lodge returned,
Mid-forest, and the wind among the boughs.
He whistled his good warhorse left to graze
Among the forest greens, vaulted upon him,
And rode beneath an ever-showering leaf,
Till one lone woman, weeping near a cross,
Stayed him. 'Why weep ye?' 'Lord,' she said, 'my man
Hath left me or is dead;' whereon he thought--
'What, if she hate me now? I would not this.
What, if she love me still? I would not that.
I know not what I would'--but said to her,
'Yet weep not thou, lest, if thy mate return,
He find thy favour changed and love thee not'--
Then pressing day by day through Lyonesse
Last in a rocky hollow, belling, heard
The hounds of Mark, and felt the goodly hounds
Yelp at his heart, but turning, past and gained
Tintagil, half in sea, and high on land,
A crown of towers.

Down in a casement sat,
A low sea-sunset glorying round her hair
And glossy-throated grace, Isolt the Queen.
And when she heard the feet of Tristram grind
The spiring stone that scaled about her tower,
Flushed, started, met him at the doors, and there
Belted his body with her white embrace,
Crying aloud, 'Not Mark--not Mark, my soul!
The footstep fluttered me at first: not he:
Catlike through his own castle steals my Mark,
But warrior-wise thou stridest through his halls
Who hates thee, as I him--even to the death.
My soul, I felt my hatred for my Mark
Quickened within me, and knew that thou wert nigh.'
To whom Sir Tristram smiling, 'I am here.
Let be thy Mark, seeing he is not thine.'

And drawing somewhat backward she replied,
`Can he be wronged who is not even his own,
But save for dread of thee had beaten me,
Scratched, bitten, blinded, marred me somehow--Mark?
What rights are his that dare not strike for them?
Not lift a hand--not, though he found me thus!
But harken! have ye met him? hence he went
Today for three days' hunting--as he said--
And so returns belike within an hour.
Mark's way, my soul!--but eat not thou with Mark,
Because he hates thee even more than fears;
Nor drink: and when thou passest any wood
Close vizard, lest an arrow from the bush
Should leave me all alone with Mark and hell.
My God, the measure of my hate for Mark
Is as the measure of my love for thee.'

So, plucked one way by hate and one by love,
Drained of her force, again she sat, and spake
To Tristram, as he knelt before her, saying,
`O hunter, and O blower of the horn,
Harper, and thou hast been a rover too,
For, ere I mated with my shambling king,
Ye twain had fallen out about the bride
Of one--his name is out of me--the prize,
If prize she were--(what marvel--she could see)--
Thine, friend; and ever since my craven seeks
To wreck thee villainously: but, O Sir Knight,
What dame or damsel have ye kneeled to last?'

And Tristram, `Last to my Queen Paramount,
Here now to my Queen Paramount of love
And loveliness--ay, lovelier than when first
Her light feet fell on our rough Lyonesse,
Sailing from Ireland.'

Softly laughed Isolt;
`Flatter me not, for hath not our great Queen
My dole of beauty trebled?' and he said,
`Her beauty is her beauty, and thine thine,
And thine is more to me--soft, gracious, kind--
Save when thy Mark is kindled on thy lips
Most gracious; but she, haughty, even to him,
Lancelot; for I have seen him wan enow
To make one doubt if ever the great Queen
Have yielded him her love.'

To whom Isolt,
`Ah then, false hunter and false harper, thou
Who brakest through the scruple of my bond,
Calling me thy white hind, and saying to me
That Guinevere had sinned against the highest,
And I--misyoked with such a want of man--
That I could hardly sin against the lowest.'

He answered, `O my soul, be comforted!
If this be sweet, to sin in leading-strings,
If here be comfort, and if ours be sin,
Crowned warrant had we for the crowning sin
That made us happy: but how ye greet me--fear
And fault and doubt--no word of that fond tale--
Thy deep heart-yearnings, thy sweet memories
Of Tristram in that year he was away.'

And, saddening on the sudden, spake Isolt,
`I had forgotten all in my strong joy
To see thee--yearnings?--ay! for, hour by hour,
Here in the never-ended afternoon,
O sweeter than all memories of thee,
Deeper than any yearnings after thee
Seemed those far-rolling, westward-smiling seas,
Watched from this tower. Isolt of Britain dashed
Before Isolt of Brittany on the strand,
Would that have chilled her bride-kiss? Wedded her?
Fought in her father's battles? wounded there?
The King was all fulfilled with gratefulness,
And she, my namesake of the hands, that healed
Thy hurt and heart with unguent and caress--
Well--can I wish her any huger wrong
Than having known thee? her too hast thou left
To pine and waste in those sweet memories.
O were I not my Mark's, by whom all men
Are noble, I should hate thee more than love.'

And Tristram, fondling her light hands, replied,
`Grace, Queen, for being loved: she loved me well.
Did I love her? the name at least I loved.
Isolt?--I fought his battles, for Isolt!
The night was dark; the true star set. Isolt!
The name was ruler of the dark--Isolt?
Care not for her! patient, and prayerful, meek,
Pale-blooded, she will yield herself to God.'

And Isolt answered, `Yea, and why not I?
Mine is the larger need, who am not meek,
Pale-blooded, prayerful. Let me tell thee now.
Here one black, mute midsummer night I sat,
Lonely, but musing on thee, wondering where,
Murmuring a light song I had heard thee sing,
And once or twice I spake thy name aloud.
Then flashed a levin-brand; and near me stood,
In fuming sulphur blue and green, a fiend--
Mark's way to steal behind one in the dark--
For there was Mark: "He has wedded her," he said,
Not said, but hissed it: then this crown of towers
So shook to such a roar of all the sky,
That here in utter dark I swooned away,
And woke again in utter dark, and cried,
"I will flee hence and give myself to God"--
And thou wert lying in thy new leman's arms.'

Then Tristram, ever dallying with her hand,
`May God be with thee, sweet, when old and gray,
And past desire!' a saying that angered her.
`"May God be with thee, sweet, when thou art old,
And sweet no more to me!" I need Him now.
For when had Lancelot uttered aught so gross
Even to the swineherd's malkin in the mast?
The greater man, the greater courtesy.
Far other was the Tristram, Arthur's knight!
But thou, through ever harrying thy wild beasts--
Save that to touch a harp, tilt with a lance
Becomes thee well--art grown wild beast thyself.
How darest thou, if lover, push me even
In fancy from thy side, and set me far
In the gray distance, half a life away,
Her to be loved no more? Unsay it, unswear!
Flatter me rather, seeing me so weak,
Broken with Mark and hate and solitude,
Thy marriage and mine own, that I should suck
Lies like sweet wines: lie to me: I believe.
Will ye not lie? not swear, as there ye kneel,
And solemnly as when ye sware to him,
The man of men, our King--My God, the power
Was once in vows when men believed the King!
They lied not then, who sware, and through their vows
The King prevailing made his realm:--I say,
Swear to me thou wilt love me even when old,

Gray-haired, and past desire, and in despair.'

Then Tristram, pacing moodily up and down,
`Vows! did you keep the vow you made to Mark
More than I mine? Lied, say ye? Nay, but learnt,
The vow that binds too strictly snaps itself--
My knighthood taught me this--ay, being snapt--
We run more counter to the soul thereof
Than had we never sworn. I swear no more.
I swore to the great King, and am forsworn.
For once--even to the height--I honoured him.
"Man, is he man at all?" methought, when first
I rode from our rough Lyonesse, and beheld
That victor of the Pagan throned in hall--
His hair, a sun that rayed from off a brow
Like hillsnow high in heaven, the steel-blue eyes,
The golden beard that clothed his lips with light--
Moreover, that weird legend of his birth,
With Merlin's mystic babble about his end
Amazed me; then, his foot was on a stool
Shaped as a dragon; he seemed to me no man,
But Michael trampling Satan; so I swore,
Being amazed: but this went by-- The vows!
O ay--the wholesome madness of an hour--
They served their use, their time; for every knight
Believed himself a greater than himself,
And every follower eyed him as a God;
Till he, being lifted up beyond himself,
Did mightier deeds than elsewhere he had done,
And so the realm was made; but then their vows--
First mainly through that sully of our Queen--
Began to gall the knighthood, asking whence
Had Arthur right to bind them to himself?
Dropt down from heaven? washed up from out the deep?
They failed to trace him through the flesh and blood
Of our old kings: whence then? a doubtful lord
To bind them by inviolable vows,
Which flesh and blood perforce would violate:
For feel this arm of mine--the tide within
Red with free chase and heather-scented air,
Pulsing full man; can Arthur make me pure
As any maiden child? lock up my tongue
From uttering freely what I freely hear?
Bind me to one? The wide world laughs at it.
And worldling of the world am I, and know
The parting that whitens ere his hour

Woos his own end; we are not angels here
Nor shall be: vows--I am woodman of the woods,
And hear the garnet-headed yaffingale
Mock them: my soul, we love but while we may;
And therefore is my love so large for thee,
Seeing it is not bounded save by love.'

Here ending, he moved toward her, and she said,
'Good: an I turned away my love for thee
To some one thrice as courteous as thyself--
For courtesy wins woman all as well
As valour may, but he that closes both
Is perfect, he is Lancelot--taller indeed,
Rosier and comelier, thou--but say I loved
This knightliest of all knights, and cast thee back
Thine own small saw, "We love but while we may,"
Well then, what answer?'

He that while she spake,
Mindful of what he brought to adorn her with,
The jewels, had let one finger lightly touch
The warm white apple of her throat, replied,
'Press this a little closer, sweet, until--
Come, I am hungered and half-angered--meat,
Wine, wine--and I will love thee to the death,
And out beyond into the dream to come.'

So then, when both were brought to full accord,
She rose, and set before him all he willed;
And after these had comforted the blood
With meats and wines, and satiated their hearts--
Now talking of their woodland paradise,
The deer, the dews, the fern, the founts, the lawns;
Now mocking at the much ungainliness,
And craven shifts, and long crane legs of Mark--
Then Tristram laughing caught the harp, and sang:

'Ay, ay, O ay--the winds that bend the brier!
A star in heaven, a star within the mere!
Ay, ay, O ay--a star was my desire,
And one was far apart, and one was near:
Ay, ay, O ay--the winds that bow the grass!
And one was water and one star was fire,
And one will ever shine and one will pass.
Ay, ay, O ay--the winds that move the mere.'

Then in the light's last glimmer Tristram showed
And swung the ruby carcanet. She cried,
`The collar of some Order, which our King
Hath newly founded, all for thee, my soul,
For thee, to yield thee grace beyond thy peers.'

`Not so, my Queen,' he said, `but the red fruit
Grown on a magic oak-tree in mid-heaven,
And won by Tristram as a tourney-prize,
And hither brought by Tristram for his last
Love-offering and peace-offering unto thee.'

He spoke, he turned, then, flinging round her neck,
Claspt it, and cried, `Thine Order, O my Queen!
But, while he bowed to kiss the jewelled throat,
Out of the dark, just as the lips had touched,
Behind him rose a shadow and a shriek--
`Mark's way,' said Mark, and clove him through the brain.

That night came Arthur home, and while he climbed,
All in a death-dumb autumn-dripping gloom,
The stairway to the hall, and looked and saw
The great Queen's bower was dark,--about his feet
A voice clung sobbing till he questioned it,
`What art thou?' and the voice about his feet
Sent up an answer, sobbing, `I am thy fool,
And I shall never make thee smile again.'

Guinevere

Queen Guinevere had fled the court, and sat
There in the holy house at Almesbury
Weeping, none with her save a little maid,
A novice: one low light betwixt them burned
Blurred by the creeping mist, for all abroad,
Beneath a moon unseen albeit at full,
The white mist, like a face-cloth to the face,
Clung to the dead earth, and the land was still.

For hither had she fled, her cause of flight
Sir Modred; he that like a subtle beast
Lay couchant with his eyes upon the throne,
Ready to spring, waiting a chance: for this
He chilled the popular praises of the King
With silent smiles of slow disparagement;
And tampered with the Lords of the White Horse,
Heathen, the brood by Hengist left; and sought
To make disruption in the Table Round
Of Arthur, and to splinter it into feuds
Serving his traitorous end; and all his aims
Were sharpened by strong hate for Lancelot.

For thus it chanced one morn when all the court,
Green-suited, but with plumes that mocked the may,
Had been, their wont, a-maying and returned,
That Modred still in green, all ear and eye,
Climbed to the high top of the garden-wall
To spy some secret scandal if he might,
And saw the Queen who sat betwixt her best
Enid, and lissome Vivien, of her court
The wiliest and the worst; and more than this
He saw not, for Sir Lancelot passing by
Spied where he couched, and as the gardener's hand
Picks from the colewort a green caterpillar,
So from the high wall and the flowering grove
Of grasses Lancelot plucked him by the heel,
And cast him as a worm upon the way;
But when he knew the Prince though marred with dust,
He, reverencing king's blood in a bad man,
Made such excuses as he might, and these
Full knightly without scorn; for in those days
No knight of Arthur's noblest dealt in scorn;
But, if a man were halt or hunched, in him
By those whom God had made full-limbed and tall,
Scorn was allowed as part of his defect,
And he was answered softly by the King
And all his Table. So Sir Lancelot holp
To raise the Prince, who rising twice or thrice
Full sharply smote his knees, and smiled, and went:
But, ever after, the small violence done
Rankled in him and ruffled all his heart,
As the sharp wind that ruffles all day long
A little bitter pool about a stone
On the bare coast.

But when Sir Lancelot told
This matter to the Queen, at first she laughed
Lightly, to think of Modred's dusty fall,
Then shuddered, as the village wife who cries
'I shudder, some one steps across my grave;'
Then laughed again, but faintlier, for indeed
She half-foresaw that he, the subtle beast,
Would track her guilt until he found, and hers
Would be for evermore a name of scorn.
Henceforward rarely could she front in hall,
Or elsewhere, Modred's narrow foxy face,
Heart-hiding smile, and gray persistent eye:
Henceforward too, the Powers that tend the soul,
To help it from the death that cannot die,
And save it even in extremes, began
To vex and plague her. Many a time for hours,
Beside the placid breathings of the King,
In the dead night, grim faces came and went
Before her, or a vague spiritual fear--
Like to some doubtful noise of creaking doors,
Heard by the watcher in a haunted house,
That keeps the rust of murder on the walls--
Held her awake: or if she slept, she dreamed
An awful dream; for then she seemed to stand
On some vast plain before a setting sun,
And from the sun there swiftly made at her
A ghastly something, and its shadow flew
Before it, till it touched her, and she turned--
When lo! her own, that broadening from her feet,
And blackening, swallowed all the land, and in it
Far cities burnt, and with a cry she woke.
And all this trouble did not pass but grew;
Till even the clear face of the guileless King,
And trustful courtesies of household life,
Became her bane; and at the last she said,
'O Lancelot, get thee hence to thine own land,
For if thou tarry we shall meet again,
And if we meet again, some evil chance
Will make the smouldering scandal break and blaze
Before the people, and our lord the King.'
And Lancelot ever promised, but remained,
And still they met and met. Again she said,
'O Lancelot, if thou love me get thee hence.'
And then they were agreed upon a night
(When the good King should not be there) to meet
And part for ever. Vivien, lurking, heard.

She told Sir Modred. Passion-pale they met
And greeted. Hands in hands, and eye to eye,
Low on the border of her couch they sat
Stammering and staring. It was their last hour,
A madness of farewells. And Modred brought
His creatures to the basement of the tower
For testimony; and crying with full voice
`Traitor, come out, ye are trapt at last,' aroused
Lancelot, who rushing outward lionlike
Leapt on him, and hurled him headlong, and he fell
Stunned, and his creatures took and bare him off,
And all was still: then she, `The end is come,
And I am shamed for ever;' and he said,
`Mine be the shame; mine was the sin: but rise,
And fly to my strong castle overseas:
There will I hide thee, till my life shall end,
There hold thee with my life against the world.'
She answered, `Lancelot, wilt thou hold me so?
Nay, friend, for we have taken our farewells.
Would God that thou couldst hide me from myself!
Mine is the shame, for I was wife, and thou
Unwedded: yet rise now, and let us fly,
For I will draw me into sanctuary,
And bide my doom.' So Lancelot got her horse,
Set her thereon, and mounted on his own,
And then they rode to the divided way,
There kissed, and parted weeping: for he past,
Love-loyal to the least wish of the Queen,
Back to his land; but she to Almesbury
Fled all night long by glimmering waste and weald,
And heard the Spirits of the waste and weald
Moan as she fled, or thought she heard them moan:
And in herself she moaned `Too late, too late!
Till in the cold wind that foreruns the morn,
A blot in heaven, the Raven, flying high,
Croaked, and she thought, `He spies a field of death;
For now the Heathen of the Northern Sea,
Lured by the crimes and frailties of the court,
Begin to slay the folk, and spoil the land.'

And when she came to Almesbury she spake
There to the nuns, and said, `Mine enemies
Pursue me, but, O peaceful Sisterhood,
Receive, and yield me sanctuary, nor ask
Her name to whom ye yield it, till her time
To tell you:' and her beauty, grace and power,

Wrought as a charm upon them, and they spared
To ask it.

So the stately Queen abode
For many a week, unknown, among the nuns;
Nor with them mixed, nor told her name, nor sought,
Wrapt in her grief, for housel or for shrift,
But communed only with the little maid,
Who pleased her with a babbling heedlessness
Which often lured her from herself; but now,
This night, a rumour wildly blown about
Came, that Sir Modred had usurped the realm,
And leagued him with the heathen, while the King
Was waging war on Lancelot: then she thought,
'With what a hate the people and the King
Must hate me,' and bowed down upon her hands
Silent, until the little maid, who brooked
No silence, brake it, uttering, 'Late! so late!
What hour, I wonder, now?' and when she drew
No answer, by and by began to hum
An air the nuns had taught her; 'Late, so late!
Which when she heard, the Queen looked up, and said,
'O maiden, if indeed ye list to sing,
Sing, and unbind my heart that I may weep.'
Whereat full willingly sang the little maid.

'Late, late, so late! and dark the night and chill!
Late, late, so late! but we can enter still.
Too late, too late! ye cannot enter now.

'No light had we: for that we do repent;
And learning this, the bridegroom will relent.
Too late, too late! ye cannot enter now.

'No light: so late! and dark and chill the night!
O let us in, that we may find the light!
Too late, too late: ye cannot enter now.

'Have we not heard the bridegroom is so sweet?
O let us in, though late, to kiss his feet!
No, no, too late! ye cannot enter now.'

So sang the novice, while full passionately,
Her head upon her hands, remembering
Her thought when first she came, wept the sad Queen.
Then said the little novice prattling to her,

`O pray you, noble lady, weep no more;
But let my words, the words of one so small,
Who knowing nothing knows but to obey,
And if I do not there is penance given--
Comfort your sorrows; for they do not flow
From evil done; right sure am I of that,
Who see your tender grace and stateliness.
But weigh your sorrows with our lord the King's,
And weighing find them less; for gone is he
To wage grim war against Sir Lancelot there,
Round that strong castle where he holds the Queen;
And Modred whom he left in charge of all,
The traitor--Ah sweet lady, the King's grief
For his own self, and his own Queen, and realm,
Must needs be thrice as great as any of ours.
For me, I thank the saints, I am not great.
For if there ever come a grief to me
I cry my cry in silence, and have done.
None knows it, and my tears have brought me good:
But even were the griefs of little ones
As great as those of great ones, yet this grief
Is added to the griefs the great must bear,
That howsoever much they may desire
Silence, they cannot weep behind a cloud:
As even here they talk at Almesbury
About the good King and his wicked Queen,
And were I such a King with such a Queen,
Well might I wish to veil her wickedness,
But were I such a King, it could not be.'

Then to her own sad heart muttered the Queen,
`Will the child kill me with her innocent talk?'
But openly she answered, `Must not I,
If this false traitor have displaced his lord,
Grieve with the common grief of all the realm?'

`Yea,' said the maid, `this is all woman's grief,
That SHE is woman, whose disloyal life
Hath wrought confusion in the Table Round
Which good King Arthur founded, years ago,
With signs and miracles and wonders, there
At Camelot, ere the coming of the Queen.'

Then thought the Queen within herself again,
`Will the child kill me with her foolish prate?'
But openly she spake and said to her,

`O little maid, shut in by nunnery walls,
What canst thou know of Kings and Tables Round,
Or what of signs and wonders, but the signs
And simple miracles of thy nunnery?'

To whom the little novice garrulously,
`Yea, but I know: the land was full of signs
And wonders ere the coming of the Queen.
So said my father, and himself was knight
Of the great Table--at the founding of it;
And rode thereto from Lyonesse, and he said
That as he rode, an hour or maybe twain
After the sunset, down the coast, he heard
Strange music, and he paused, and turning--there,
All down the lonely coast of Lyonesse,
Each with a beacon-star upon his head,
And with a wild sea-light about his feet,
He saw them--headland after headland flame
Far on into the rich heart of the west:
And in the light the white mermaiden swam,
And strong man-breasted things stood from the sea,
And sent a deep sea-voice through all the land,
To which the little elves of chasm and cleft
Made answer, sounding like a distant horn.
So said my father--yea, and furthermore,
Next morning, while he past the dim-lit woods,
Himself beheld three spirits mad with joy
Come dashing down on a tall wayside flower,
That shook beneath them, as the thistle shakes
When three gray linnets wrangle for the seed:
And still at evenings on before his horse
The flickering fairy-circle wheeled and broke
Flying, and linked again, and wheeled and broke
Flying, for all the land was full of life.
And when at last he came to Camelot,
A wreath of airy dancers hand-in-hand
Swung round the lighted lantern of the hall;
And in the hall itself was such a feast
As never man had dreamed; for every knight
Had whatsoever meat he longed for served
By hands unseen; and even as he said
Down in the cellars merry bloated things
Shouldered the spigot, straddling on the butts
While the wine ran: so glad were spirits and men
Before the coming of the sinful Queen.'

Then spake the Queen and somewhat bitterly,
`Were they so glad? ill prophets were they all,
Spirits and men: could none of them foresee,
Not even thy wise father with his signs
And wonders, what has fallen upon the realm?'

To whom the novice garrulously again,
`Yea, one, a bard; of whom my father said,
Full many a noble war-song had he sung,
Even in the presence of an enemy's fleet,
Between the steep cliff and the coming wave;
And many a mystic lay of life and death
Had chanted on the smoky mountain-tops,
When round him bent the spirits of the hills
With all their dewy hair blown back like flame:
So said my father--and that night the bard
Sang Arthur's glorious wars, and sang the King
As wellnigh more than man, and railed at those
Who called him the false son of Gorlos:
For there was no man knew from whence he came;
But after tempest, when the long wave broke
All down the thundering shores of Bude and Bos,
There came a day as still as heaven, and then
They found a naked child upon the sands
Of dark Tintagil by the Cornish sea;
And that was Arthur; and they fostered him
Till he by miracle was approven King:
And that his grave should be a mystery
From all men, like his birth; and could he find
A woman in her womanhood as great
As he was in his manhood, then, he sang,
The twain together well might change the world.
But even in the middle of his song
He faltered, and his hand fell from the harp,
And pale he turned, and reeled, and would have fallen,
But that they stayed him up; nor would he tell
His vision; but what doubt that he foresaw
This evil work of Lancelot and the Queen?'

Then thought the Queen, `Lo! they have set her on,
Our simple-seeming Abbess and her nuns,
To play upon me,' and bowed her head nor spake.
Whereat the novice crying, with clasped hands,
Shame on her own garrulity garrulously,
Said the good nuns would check her gadding tongue
Full often, `and, sweet lady, if I seem

To vex an ear too sad to listen to me,
Unmannerly, with prattling and the tales
Which my good father told me, check me too
Nor let me shame my father's memory, one
Of noblest manners, though himself would say
Sir Lancelot had the noblest; and he died,
Killed in a tilt, come next, five summers back,
And left me; but of others who remain,
And of the two first-famed for courtesy--
And pray you check me if I ask amiss--
But pray you, which had noblest, while you moved
Among them, Lancelot or our lord the King?'

Then the pale Queen looked up and answered her,
'Sir Lancelot, as became a noble knight,
Was gracious to all ladies, and the same
In open battle or the tilting-field
Forbore his own advantage, and the King
In open battle or the tilting-field
Forbore his own advantage, and these two
Were the most nobly-mannered men of all;
For manners are not idle, but the fruit
Of loyal nature, and of noble mind.'

'Yea,' said the maid, 'be manners such fair fruit?'
Then Lancelot's needs must be a thousand-fold
Less noble, being, as all rumour runs,
The most disloyal friend in all the world.'

To which a mournful answer made the Queen:
'O closed about by narrowing nunnery-walls,
What knowest thou of the world, and all its lights
And shadows, all the wealth and all the woe?
If ever Lancelot, that most noble knight,
Were for one hour less noble than himself,
Pray for him that he scape the doom of fire,
And weep for her that drew him to his doom.'

'Yea,' said the little novice, 'I pray for both;
But I should all as soon believe that his,
Sir Lancelot's, were as noble as the King's,
As I could think, sweet lady, yours would be
Such as they are, were you the sinful Queen.'

So she, like many another babbler, hurt
Whom she would soothe, and harmed where she would heal;

For here a sudden flush of wrathful heat
Fired all the pale face of the Queen, who cried,
`Such as thou art be never maiden more
For ever! thou their tool, set on to plague
And play upon, and harry me, petty spy
And traitress.' When that storm of anger brake
From Guinevere, aghast the maiden rose,
White as her veil, and stood before the Queen
As tremulously as foam upon the beach
Stands in a wind, ready to break and fly,
And when the Queen had added `Get thee hence,'
Fled frightened. Then that other left alone
Sighed, and began to gather heart again,
Saying in herself, `The simple, fearful child
Meant nothing, but my own too-fearful guilt,
Simpler than any child, betrays itself.
But help me, heaven, for surely I repent.
For what is true repentance but in thought--
Not even in inmost thought to think again
The sins that made the past so pleasant to us:
And I have sworn never to see him more,
To see him more.'

And even in saying this,
Her memory from old habit of the mind
Went slipping back upon the golden days
In which she saw him first, when Lancelot came,
Reputed the best knight and goodliest man,
Ambassador, to lead her to his lord
Arthur, and led her forth, and far ahead
Of his and her retinue moving, they,
Rapt in sweet talk or lively, all on love
And sport and tilts and pleasure, (for the time
Was maytime, and as yet no sin was dreamed,)
Rode under groves that looked a paradise
Of blossom, over sheets of hyacinth
That seemed the heavens upbreking through the earth,
And on from hill to hill, and every day
Beheld at noon in some delicious dale
The silk pavilions of King Arthur raised
For brief repast or afternoon repose
By couriers gone before; and on again,
Till yet once more ere set of sun they saw
The Dragon of the great Pendragonship,
That crowned the state pavilion of the King,
Blaze by the rushing brook or silent well.

But when the Queen immersed in such a trance,
And moving through the past unconsciously,
Came to that point where first she saw the King
Ride toward her from the city, sighed to find
Her journey done, glanced at him, thought him cold,
High, self-contained, and passionless, not like him,
`Not like my Lancelot'--while she brooded thus
And grew half-guilty in her thoughts again,
There rode an armed warrior to the doors.
A murmuring whisper through the nunnery ran,
Then on a sudden a cry, `The King.' She sat
Stiff-stricken, listening; but when armed feet
Through the long gallery from the outer doors
Rang coming, prone from off her seat she fell,
And grovelled with her face against the floor:
There with her milkwhite arms and shadowy hair
She made her face a darkness from the King:
And in the darkness heard his armed feet
Pause by her; then came silence, then a voice,
Monotonous and hollow like a Ghost's
Denouncing judgment, but though changed, the King's:

`Liest thou here so low, the child of one
I honoured, happy, dead before thy shame?
Well is it that no child is born of thee.
The children born of thee are sword and fire,
Red ruin, and the breaking up of laws,
The craft of kindred and the Godless hosts
Of heathen swarming o'er the Northern Sea;
Whom I, while yet Sir Lancelot, my right arm,
The mightiest of my knights, abode with me,
Have everywhere about this land of Christ
In twelve great battles ruining overthrown.
And knowest thou now from whence I come--from him
From waging bitter war with him: and he,
That did not shun to smite me in worse way,
Had yet that grace of courtesy in him left,
He spared to lift his hand against the King
Who made him knight: but many a knight was slain;
And many more, and all his kith and kin
Clave to him, and abode in his own land.
And many more when Modred raised revolt,
Forgetful of their troth and fealty, clave
To Modred, and a remnant stays with me.
And of this remnant will I leave a part,

True men who love me still, for whom I live,
To guard thee in the wild hour coming on,
Lest but a hair of this low head be harmed.
Fear not: thou shalt be guarded till my death.
Howbeit I know, if ancient prophecies
Have erred not, that I march to meet my doom.
Thou hast not made my life so sweet to me,
That I the King should greatly care to live;
For thou hast spoilt the purpose of my life.
Bear with me for the last time while I show,
Even for thy sake, the sin which thou hast sinned.
For when the Roman left us, and their law
Relaxed its hold upon us, and the ways
Were filled with rapine, here and there a deed
Of prowess done redressed a random wrong.
But I was first of all the kings who drew
The knighthood-errant of this realm and all
The realms together under me, their Head,
In that fair Order of my Table Round,
A glorious company, the flower of men,
To serve as model for the mighty world,
And be the fair beginning of a time.
I made them lay their hands in mine and swear
To reverence the King, as if he were
Their conscience, and their conscience as their King,
To break the heathen and uphold the Christ,
To ride abroad redressing human wrongs,
To speak no slander, no, nor listen to it,
To honour his own word as if his God's,
To lead sweet lives in purest chastity,
To love one maiden only, cleave to her,
And worship her by years of noble deeds,
Until they won her; for indeed I knew
Of no more subtle master under heaven
Than is the maiden passion for a maid,
Not only to keep down the base in man,
But teach high thought, and amiable words
And courtliness, and the desire of fame,
And love of truth, and all that makes a man.
And all this throve before I wedded thee,
Believing, "lo mine helpmate, one to feel
My purpose and rejoicing in my joy."
Then came thy shameful sin with Lancelot;
Then came the sin of Tristram and Isolt;
Then others, following these my mightiest knights,
And drawing foul ensample from fair names,

Sinned also, till the loathsome opposite
Of all my heart had destined did obtain,
And all through thee! so that this life of mine
I guard as God's high gift from scathe and wrong,
Not greatly care to lose; but rather think
How sad it were for Arthur, should he live,
To sit once more within his lonely hall,
And miss the wonted number of my knights,
And miss to hear high talk of noble deeds
As in the golden days before thy sin.
For which of us, who might be left, could speak
Of the pure heart, nor seem to glance at thee?
And in thy bowers of Camelot or of Usk
Thy shadow still would glide from room to room,
And I should evermore be vexed with thee
In hanging robe or vacant ornament,
Or ghostly footfall echoing on the stair.
For think not, though thou wouldst not love thy lord,
Thy lord hast wholly lost his love for thee.
I am not made of so slight elements.
Yet must I leave thee, woman, to thy shame.
I hold that man the worst of public foes
Who either for his own or children's sake,
To save his blood from scandal, lets the wife
Whom he knows false, abide and rule the house:
For being through his cowardice allowed
Her station, taken everywhere for pure,
She like a new disease, unknown to men,
Creeps, no precaution used, among the crowd,
Makes wicked lightnings of her eyes, and saps
The fealty of our friends, and stirs the pulse
With devil's leaps, and poisons half the young.
Worst of the worst were that man he that reigns!
Better the King's waste hearth and aching heart
Than thou re-seated in thy place of light,
The mockery of my people, and their bane.'

He paused, and in the pause she crept an inch
Nearer, and laid her hands about his feet.
Far off a solitary trumpet blew.
Then waiting by the doors the warhorse neighed
At a friend's voice, and he spake again:

'Yet think not that I come to urge thy crimes,
I did not come to curse thee, Guinevere,
I, whose vast pity almost makes me die

To see thee, laying there thy golden head,
My pride in happier summers, at my feet.
The wrath which forced my thoughts on that fierce law,
The doom of treason and the flaming death,
(When first I learnt thee hidden here) is past.
The pang--which while I weighed thy heart with one
Too wholly true to dream untruth in thee,
Made my tears burn--is also past--in part.
And all is past, the sin is sinned, and I,
Lo! I forgive thee, as Eternal God
Forgives: do thou for thine own soul the rest.
But how to take last leave of all I loved?
O golden hair, with which I used to play
Not knowing! O imperial-moulded form,
And beauty such as never woman wore,
Until it became a kingdom's curse with thee--
I cannot touch thy lips, they are not mine,
But Lancelot's: nay, they never were the King's.
I cannot take thy hand: that too is flesh,
And in the flesh thou hast sinned; and mine own flesh,
Here looking down on thine polluted, cries
"I loathe thee:" yet not less, O Guinevere,
For I was ever virgin save for thee,
My love through flesh hath wrought into my life
So far, that my doom is, I love thee still.
Let no man dream but that I love thee still.
Perchance, and so thou purify thy soul,
And so thou lean on our fair father Christ,
Hereafter in that world where all are pure
We two may meet before high God, and thou
Wilt spring to me, and claim me thine, and know
I am thine husband--not a smaller soul,
Nor Lancelot, nor another. Leave me that,
I charge thee, my last hope. Now must I hence.
Through the thick night I hear the trumpet blow:
They summon me their King to lead mine hosts
Far down to that great battle in the west,
Where I must strike against the man they call
My sister's son--no kin of mine, who leagues
With Lords of the White Horse, heathen, and knights,
Traitors--and strike him dead, and meet myself
Death, or I know not what mysterious doom.
And thou remaining here wilt learn the event;
But hither shall I never come again,
Never lie by thy side; see thee no more--
Farewell!"

And while she grovelled at his feet,
She felt the King's breath wander o'er her neck,
And in the darkness o'er her fallen head,
Perceived the waving of his hands that blest.

Then, listening till those armd steps were gone,
Rose the pale Queen, and in her anguish found
The casement: 'peradventure,' so she thought,
'If I might see his face, and not be seen.'
And lo, he sat on horseback at the door!
And near him the sad nuns with each a light
Stood, and he gave them charge about the Queen,
To guard and foster her for evermore.
And while he spake to these his helm was lowered,
To which for crest the golden dragon clung
Of Britain; so she did not see the face,
Which then was as an angel's, but she saw,
Wet with the mists and smitten by the lights,
The Dragon of the great Pendragonship
Blaze, making all the night a steam of fire.
And even then he turned; and more and more
The moony vapour rolling round the King,
Who seemed the phantom of a Giant in it,
Enwound him fold by fold, and made him gray
And grayer, till himself became as mist
Before her, moving ghostlike to his doom.

Then she stretched out her arms and cried aloud
 'Oh Arthur!' there her voice brake suddenly,
 Then--as a stream that spouting from a cliff
 Fails in mid air, but gathering at the base
 Re-makes itself, and flashes down the vale--
 Went on in passionate utterance:

'Gone--my lord!
 Gone through my sin to slay and to be slain!
 And he forgave me, and I could not speak.
 Farewell? I should have answered his farewell.
 His mercy choked me. Gone, my lord the King,
 My own true lord! how dare I call him mine?
 The shadow of another cleaves to me,
 And makes me one pollution: he, the King,
 Called me polluted: shall I kill myself?
 What help in that? I cannot kill my sin,
 If soul be soul; nor can I kill my shame;

No, nor by living can I live it down.
The days will grow to weeks, the weeks to months
The months will add themselves and make the years,
The years will roll into the centuries,
And mine will ever be a name of scorn.
I must not dwell on that defeat of fame.
Let the world be; that is but of the world.
What else? what hope? I think there was a hope,
Except he mocked me when he spake of hope;
His hope he called it; but he never mocks,
For mockery is the fume of little hearts.
And blessed be the King, who hath forgiven
My wickedness to him, and left me hope
That in mine own heart I can live down sin
And be his mate hereafter in the heavens
Before high God. Ah great and gentle lord,
Who wast, as is the conscience of a saint
Among his warring senses, to thy knights--
To whom my false voluptuous pride, that took
Full easily all impressions from below,
Would not look up, or half-despised the height
To which I would not or I could not climb--
I thought I could not breathe in that fine air
That pure severity of perfect light--
I yearned for warmth and colour which I found
In Lancelot--now I see thee what thou art,
Thou art the highest and most human too,
Not Lancelot, nor another. Is there none
Will tell the King I love him though so late?
Now--ere he goes to the great Battle? none:
Myself must tell him in that purer life,
But now it were too daring. Ah my God,
What might I not have made of thy fair world,
Had I but loved thy highest creature here?
It was my duty to have loved the highest:
It surely was my profit had I known:
It would have been my pleasure had I seen.
We needs must love the highest when we see it,
Not Lancelot, nor another.'

Here her hand
Grasped, made her veil her eyes: she looked and saw
The novice, weeping, suppliant, and said to her,
'Yea, little maid, for am I not forgiven?'
Then glancing up beheld the holy nuns
All round her, weeping; and her heart was loosed

Within her, and she wept with these and said,

`Ye know me then, that wicked one, who broke
The vast design and purpose of the King.
O shut me round with narrowing nunnery-walls,
Meek maidens, from the voices crying "shame."
I must not scorn myself: he loves me still.
Let no one dream but that he loves me still.
So let me, if you do not shudder at me,
Nor shun to call me sister, dwell with you;
Wear black and white, and be a nun like you,
Fast with your fasts, not feasting with your feasts;
Grieve with your griefs, not grieving at your joys,
But not rejoicing; mingle with your rites;
Pray and be prayed for; lie before your shrines;
Do each low office of your holy house;
Walk your dim cloister, and distribute dole
To poor sick people, richer in His eyes
Who ransomed us, and halter too than I;
And treat their loathsome hurts and heal mine own;
And so wear out in almsdeed and in prayer
The sombre close of that voluptuous day,
Which wrought the ruin of my lord the King.'

She said: they took her to themselves; and she
Still hoping, fearing `is it yet too late?'
Dwelt with them, till in time their Abbess died.
Then she, for her good deeds and her pure life,
And for the power of ministration in her,
And likewise for the high rank she had borne,
Was chosen Abbess, there, an Abbess, lived
For three brief years, and there, an Abbess, past
To where beyond these voices there is peace.

The Passing of Arthur

That story which the bold Sir Bedivere,
First made and latest left of all the knights,
Told, when the man was no more than a voice

In the white winter of his age, to those
With whom he dwelt, new faces, other minds.

For on their march to westward, Bedivere,
Who slowly paced among the slumbering host,
Heard in his tent the moanings of the King:

'I found Him in the shining of the stars,
I marked Him in the flowering of His fields,
But in His ways with men I find Him not.
I waged His wars, and now I pass and die.
O me! for why is all around us here
As if some lesser god had made the world,
But had not force to shape it as he would,
Till the High God behold it from beyond,
And enter it, and make it beautiful?
Or else as if the world were wholly fair,
But that these eyes of men are dense and dim,
And have not power to see it as it is:
Perchance, because we see not to the close;--
For I, being simple, thought to work His will,
And have but stricken with the sword in vain;
And all whereon I leaned in wife and friend
Is traitor to my peace, and all my realm
Reels back into the beast, and is no more.
My God, thou hast forgotten me in my death;
Nay--God my Christ--I pass but shall not die.'

Then, ere that last weird battle in the west,
There came on Arthur sleeping, Gawain killed
In Lancelot's war, the ghost of Gawain blown
Along a wandering wind, and past his ear
Went shrilling, 'Hollow, hollow all delight!
Hail, King! tomorrow thou shalt pass away.
Farewell! there is an isle of rest for thee.
And I am blown along a wandering wind,
And hollow, hollow, hollow all delight.'
And fainter onward, like wild birds that change
Their season in the night and wail their way
From cloud to cloud, down the long wind the dream
Shrilled; but in going mingled with dim cries
Far in the moonlit haze among the hills,
As of some lonely city sacked by night,
When all is lost, and wife and child with wail
Pass to new lords; and Arthur woke and called,
'Who spake? A dream. O light upon the wind,

Thine, Gawain, was the voice--are these dim cries
Thine? or doth all that haunts the waste and wild
Mourn, knowing it will go along with me?

This heard the bold Sir Bedivere and spake:
'O me, my King, let pass whatever will,
Elves, and the harmless glamour of the field;
But in their stead thy name and glory cling
To all high places like a golden cloud
For ever: but as yet thou shalt not pass.
Light was Gawain in life, and light in death
Is Gawain, for the ghost is as the man;
And care not thou for dreams from him, but rise--
I hear the steps of Modred in the west,
And with him many of thy people, and knights
Once thine, whom thou hast loved, but grosser grown
Than heathen, spitting at their vows and thee.
Right well in heart they know thee for the King.
Arise, go forth and conquer as of old.'

Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedivere:
'Far other is this battle in the west
Whereto we move, than when we strove in youth,
And brake the petty kings, and fought with Rome,
Or thrust the heathen from the Roman wall,
And shook him through the north. Ill doom is mine
To war against my people and my knights.
The king who fights his people fights himself.
And they my knights, who loved me once, the stroke
That strikes them dead is as my death to me.
Yet let us hence, and find or feel a way
Through this blind haze, which ever since I saw
One lying in the dust at Almesbury,
Hath folded in the passes of the world.'

Then rose the King and moved his host by night,
And ever pushed Sir Modred, league by league,
Back to the sunset bound of Lyonesse--
A land of old upheaven from the abyss
By fire, to sink into the abyss again;
Where fragments of forgotten peoples dwelt,
And the long mountains ended in a coast
Of ever-shifting sand, and far away
The phantom circle of a moaning sea.
There the pursuer could pursue no more,
And he that fled no further fly the King;

And there, that day when the great light of heaven
Burned at his lowest in the rolling year,
On the waste sand by the waste sea they closed.
Nor ever yet had Arthur fought a fight
Like this last, dim, weird battle of the west.
A deathwhite mist slept over sand and sea:
Whereof the chill, to him who breathed it, drew
Down with his blood, till all his heart was cold
With formless fear; and even on Arthur fell
Confusion, since he saw not whom he fought.
For friend and foe were shadows in the mist,
And friend slew friend not knowing whom he slew;
And some had visions out of golden youth,
And some beheld the faces of old ghosts
Look in upon the battle; and in the mist
Was many a noble deed, many a base,
And chance and craft and strength in single fights,
And ever and anon with host to host
Shocks, and the splintering spear, the hard mail hewn,
Shield-breakings, and the clash of brands, the crash
Of battleaxes on shattered helms, and shrieks
After the Christ, of those who falling down
Looked up for heaven, and only saw the mist;
And shouts of heathen and the traitor knights,
Oaths, insults, filth, and monstrous blasphemies,
Sweat, writhings, anguish, labouring of the lungs
In that close mist, and cryings for the light,
Moans of the dying, and voices of the dead.

Last, as by some one deathbed after wail
Of suffering, silence follows, or through death
Or deathlike swoon, thus over all that shore,
Save for some whisper of the seething seas,
A dead hush fell; but when the dolorous day
Grew drearier toward twilight falling, came
A bitter wind, clear from the North, and blew
The mist aside, and with that wind the tide
Rose, and the pale King glanced across the field
Of battle: but no man was moving there;
Nor any cry of Christian heard thereon,
Nor yet of heathen; only the wan wave
Brake in among dead faces, to and fro
Swaying the helpless hands, and up and down
Tumbling the hollow helmets of the fallen,
And shivered brands that once had fought with Rome,
And rolling far along the gloomy shores

The voice of days of old and days to be.

Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedivere,
And whiter than the mist that all day long
Had held the field of battle was the King:

'Hearest thou this great voice that shakes the world,
And wastes the narrow realm whereon we move,
And beats upon the faces of the dead,
My dead, as though they had not died for me?--
O Bedivere, for on my heart hath fallen
Confusion, till I know not what I am,
Nor whence I am, nor whether I be King.
Behold, I seem but King among the dead.'

Then spake the bold Sir Bedivere: 'My King,
King everywhere! and so the dead have kings,
There also will I worship thee as King.
Yet still thy life is whole, and still I live
Who love thee; but who hates thee, he that brought
The heathen back among us, yonder stands,
Modred, unharmed, the traitor of thine house.'

Then spake the King: 'My house hath been my doom.
But call not thou this traitor of my house
Who hath but dwelt beneath one roof with me.
My house are rather they who sware my vows,
Yea, even while they brake them, owned me King.
And well for thee, saying in my dark hour,
When all the purport of my throne hath failed,
That quick or dead thou holdest me for King.
King am I, whatsoever be their cry;
And one last act of kingship shalt thou see
Yet, ere I pass.' And uttering this the King
Made at the man: then Modred smote his liege
Hard on that helm which many a heathen sword
Had beaten thin; while Arthur at one blow,
Striking the last stroke with Excalibur,
Slew him, and all but slain himself, he fell.

So all day long the noise of battle rolled
Among the mountains by the winter sea;
Until King Arthur's Table, man by man,
Had fallen in Lyonnesse about their lord,
King Arthur. Then, because his wound was deep,
The bold Sir Bedivere uplifted him,

And bore him to a chapel nigh the field,
A broken chancel with a broken cross,
That stood on a dark strait of barren land:
On one side lay the Ocean, and on one
Lay a great water, and the moon was full.

Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedivere:
'The sequel of today unsolders all
The goodliest fellowship of famous knights
Whereof this world holds record. Such a sleep
They sleep--the men I loved. I think that we
Shall never more, at any future time,
Delight our souls with talk of knightly deeds,
Walking about the gardens and the halls
Of Camelot, as in the days that were.
I perish by this people which I made,--
Though Merlin sware that I should come again
To rule once more; but, let what will be, be,
I am so deeply smitten through the helm
That without help I cannot last till morn.
Thou therefore take my brand Excalibur,
Which was my pride: for thou rememberest how
In those old days, one summer noon, an arm
Rose up from out the bosom of the lake,
Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful,
Holding the sword--and how I rowed across
And took it, and have worn it, like a king;
And, wheresoever I am sung or told
In aftertime, this also shall be known:
But now delay not: take Excalibur,
And fling him far into the middle mere:
Watch what thou seest, and lightly bring me word.'

To him replied the bold Sir Bedivere:
'It is not meet, Sir King, to leave thee thus,
Aidless, alone, and smitten through the helm--
A little thing may harm a wounded man;
Yet I thy hest will all perform at full,
Watch what I see, and lightly bring thee word.'

So saying, from the ruined shrine he stept,
And in the moon athwart the place of tombs,
Where lay the mighty bones of ancient men,
Old knights, and over them the sea-wind sang
Shrill, chill, with flakes of foam. He, stepping down
By zigzag paths, and juts of pointed rock,

Came on the shining levels of the lake.

There drew he forth the brand Excalibur,
And o'er him, drawing it, the winter moon,
Brightening the skirts of a long cloud, ran forth
And sparkled keen with frost against the hilt:
For all the haft twinkled with diamond sparks,
Myriads of topaz-lights, and jacinth-work
Of subtlest jewellery. He gazed so long
That both his eyes were dazzled as he stood,
This way and that dividing the swift mind,
In act to throw: but at the last it seemed
Better to leave Excalibur concealed
There in the many-knotted waterflags,
That whistled stiff and dry about the marge.
So strode he back slow to the wounded King.

Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedivere:
'Hast thou performed my mission which I gave?
What is it thou hast seen? or what hast heard?'

And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere:
'I heard the ripple washing in the reeds,
And the wild water lapping on the crag.'

To whom replied King Arthur, faint and pale:
'Thou hast betrayed thy nature and thy name,
Not rendering true answer, as beseemed
Thy father, nor like a noble knight:
For surer sign had followed, either hand,
Or voice, or else a motion of the mere.
This is a shameful thing for men to lie.
Yet now, I charge thee, quickly go again,
As thou art lief and dear, and do the thing
I bade thee, watch, and lightly bring me word.'

Then went Sir Bedivere the second time
Across the ridge, and paced beside the mere,
Counting the dewy pebbles, fixed in thought;
But when he saw the wonder of the hilt,
How curiously and strangely chased, he smote
His palms together, and he cried aloud:

'And if indeed I cast the brand away,
Surely a precious thing, one worthy note,
Should thus be lost for ever from the earth,

Which might have pleased the eyes of many men.
What good should follow this, if this were done?
What harm, undone? Deep harm to disobey,
Seeing obedience is the bond of rule.
Were it well to obey then, if a king demand
An act unprofitable, against himself?
The King is sick, and knows not what he does.
What record, or what relic of my lord
Should be to aftertime, but empty breath
And rumours of a doubt? But were this kept,
Stored in some treasure-house of mighty kings,
Some one might show it at a joust of arms,
Saying, "King Arthur's sword, Excalibur,
Wrought by the lonely maiden of the Lake.
Nine years she wrought it, sitting in the deeps
Upon the hidden bases of the hills."
So might some old man speak in the aftertime
To all the people, winning reverence.
But now much honour and much fame were lost.'

So spake he, clouded with his own conceit,
And hid Excalibur the second time,
And so strode back slow to the wounded King.

Then spoke King Arthur, breathing heavily:
'What is it thou hast seen? or what hast heard?'

And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere:
'I heard the water lapping on the crag,
And the long ripple washing in the reeds.'

To whom replied King Arthur, much in wrath:
'Ah, miserable and unkind, untrue,
Unknightly, traitor-hearted! Woe is me!
Authority forgets a dying king,
Laid widowed of the power in his eye
That bowed the will. I see thee what thou art,
For thou, the latest-left of all my knights,
In whom should meet the offices of all,
Thou wouldst betray me for the precious hilt;
Either from lust of gold, or like a girl
Valuing the giddy pleasure of the eyes.
Yet, for a man may fail in duty twice,
And the third time may prosper, get thee hence:
But, if thou spare to fling Excalibur,
I will arise and slay thee with my hands.'

Then quickly rose Sir Bedivere, and ran,
And, leaping down the ridges lightly, plunged
Among the bulrush beds, and clutched the sword,
And strongly wheeled and threw it. The great brand
Made lightnings in the splendour of the moon,
And flashing round and round, and whirled in an arch,
Shot like a streamer of the northern morn,
Seen where the moving isles of winter shock
By night, with noises of the Northern Sea.
So flashed and fell the brand Excalibur:
But ere he dipt the surface, rose an arm
Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful,
And caught him by the hilt, and brandished him
Three times, and drew him under in the mere.
And lightly went the other to the King.

Then spoke King Arthur, drawing thicker breath:
'Now see I by thine eyes that this is done.
Speak out: what is it thou hast heard, or seen?'

And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere:
'Sir King, I closed mine eyelids, lest the gems
Should blind my purpose, for I never saw,
Nor shall see, here or elsewhere, till I die,
Not though I live three lives of mortal men,
So great a miracle as yonder hilt.
Then with both hands I flung him, wheeling him;
But when I looked again, behold an arm,
Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful,
That caught him by the hilt, and brandished him
Three times, and drew him under in the mere.'

And answer made King Arthur, breathing hard:
'My end draws nigh; 'tis time that I were gone.
Make broad thy shoulders to receive my weight,
And bear me to the margin; yet I fear
My wound hath taken cold, and I shall die.'

So saying, from the pavement he half rose,
Slowly, with pain, reclining on his arm,
And looking wistfully with wide blue eyes
As in a picture. Him Sir Bedivere
Remorsefully regarded through his tears,
And would have spoken, but he found not words;
Then took with care, and kneeling on one knee,

O'er both his shoulders drew the languid hands,
And rising bore him through the place of tombs.

But, as he walked, King Arthur panted hard,
Like one that feels a nightmare on his bed
When all the house is mute. So sighed the King,
Muttering and murmuring at his ear, 'Quick, quick!
I fear it is too late, and I shall die.'

But the other swiftly strode from ridge to ridge,
Clothed with his breath, and looking, as he walked,
Larger than human on the frozen hills.
He heard the deep behind him, and a cry
Before. His own thought drove him like a goad.
Dry clashed his harness in the icy caves
And barren chasms, and all to left and right
The bare black cliff clanged round him, as he based
His feet on juts of slippery crag that rang
Sharp-smitten with the dint of armed heels--
And on a sudden, lo! the level lake,
And the long glories of the winter moon.

Then saw they how there hove a dusky barge,
Dark as a funeral scarf from stem to stern,
Beneath them; and descending they were ware
That all the decks were dense with stately forms,
Black-stoled, black-hooded, like a dream--by these
Three Queens with crowns of gold: and from them rose
A cry that shivered to the tingling stars,
And, as it were one voice, an agony
Of lamentation, like a wind that shrills
All night in a waste land, where no one comes,
Or hath come, since the making of the world.

Then murmured Arthur, 'Place me in the barge.'
So to the barge they came. There those three Queens
Put forth their hands, and took the King, and wept.
But she, that rose the tallest of them all
And fairest, laid his head upon her lap,
And loosed the shattered casque, and chafed his hands,
And called him by his name, complaining loud,
And dropping bitter tears against a brow
Striped with dark blood: for all his face was white
And colourless, and like the withered moon
Smote by the fresh beam of the springing east;
And all his greaves and cuisses dashed with drops

Of onset; and the light and lustrous curls--
That made his forehead like a rising sun
High from the das-throne--were parched with dust;
Or, clotted into points and hanging loose,
Mixed with the knightly growth that fringed his lips.
So like a shattered column lay the King;
Not like that Arthur who, with lance in rest,
From spur to plume a star of tournament,
Shot through the lists at Camelot, and charged
Before the eyes of ladies and of kings.

Then loudly cried the bold Sir Bedivere:
'Ah! my Lord Arthur, whither shall I go?
Where shall I hide my forehead and my eyes?
For now I see the true old times are dead,
When every morning brought a noble chance,
And every chance brought out a noble knight.
Such times have been not since the light that led
The holy Elders with the gift of myrrh.
But now the whole Round Table is dissolved
Which was an image of the mighty world,
And I, the last, go forth companionless,
And the days darken round me, and the years,
Among new men, strange faces, other minds.'

And slowly answered Arthur from the barge:
'The old order changeth, yielding place to new,
And God fulfils himself in many ways,
Lest one good custom should corrupt the world.
Comfort thyself: what comfort is in me?
I have lived my life, and that which I have done
May He within himself make pure! but thou,
If thou shouldst never see my face again,
Pray for my soul. More things are wrought by prayer
Than this world dreams of. Wherefore, let thy voice
Rise like a fountain for me night and day.
For what are men better than sheep or goats
That nourish a blind life within the brain,
If, knowing God, they lift not hands of prayer
Both for themselves and those who call them friend?
For so the whole round earth is every way
Bound by gold chains about the feet of God.
But now farewell. I am going a long way
With these thou seest--if indeed I go
(For all my mind is clouded with a doubt)--
To the island-valley of Avilion;

Where falls not hail, or rain, or any snow,
Nor ever wind blows loudly; but it lies
Deep-meadowed, happy, fair with orchard lawns
And bowery hollows crowned with summer sea,
Where I will heal me of my grievous wound.'

So said he, and the barge with oar and sail
Moved from the brink, like some full-breasted swan
That, fluting a wild carol ere her death,
Ruffles her pure cold plume, and takes the flood
With swarthy webs. Long stood Sir Bedivere
Revolving many memories, till the hull
Looked one black dot against the verge of dawn,
And on the mere the wailing died away.

But when that moan had past for evermore,
The stillness of the dead world's winter dawn
Amazed him, and he groaned, 'The King is gone.'
And therewithal came on him the weird rhyme,
'From the great deep to the great deep he goes.'

Whereat he slowly turned and slowly clomb
The last hard footstep of that iron crag;
Thence marked the black hull moving yet, and cried,
'He passes to be King among the dead,
And after healing of his grievous wound
He comes again; but--if he come no more--
O me, be yon dark Queens in yon black boat,
Who shrieked and wailed, the three whereat we gazed
On that high day, when, clothed with living light,
They stood before his throne in silence, friends
Of Arthur, who should help him at his need?'

Then from the dawn it seemed there came, but faint
As from beyond the limit of the world,
Like the last echo born of a great cry,
Sounds, as if some fair city were one voice
Around a king returning from his wars.

Thereat once more he moved about, and clomb
Even to the highest he could climb, and saw,
Straining his eyes beneath an arch of hand,
Or thought he saw, the speck that bore the King,
Down that long water opening on the deep
Somewhere far off, pass on and on, and go
From less to less and vanish into light.

And the new sun rose bringing the new year.

To the Queen

O loyal to the royal in thyself,
And loyal to thy land, as this to thee--
Bear witness, that rememberable day,
When, pale as yet, and fever-worn, the Prince
Who scarce had plucked his flickering life again
From halfway down the shadow of the grave,
Past with thee through thy people and their love,
And London rolled one tide of joy through all
Her trebled millions, and loud leagues of man
And welcome! witness, too, the silent cry,
The prayer of many a race and creed, and clime--
Thunderless lightnings striking under sea
From sunset and sunrise of all thy realm,
And that true North, whereof we lately heard
A strain to shame us 'keep you to yourselves;
So loyal is too costly! friends--your love
Is but a burthen: loose the bond, and go.'
Is this the tone of empire? here the faith
That made us rulers? this, indeed, her voice
And meaning, whom the roar of Hougoumont
Left mightiest of all peoples under heaven?
What shock has fooled her since, that she should speak
So feebly? wealthier--wealthier--hour by hour!
The voice of Britain, or a sinking land,
Some third-rate isle half-lost among her seas?
THERE rang her voice, when the full city pealed
Thee and thy Prince! The loyal to their crown
Are loyal to their own far sons, who love
Our ocean-empire with her boundless homes
For ever-broadening England, and her throne
In our vast Orient, and one isle, one isle,
That knows not her own greatness: if she knows
And dreads it we are fallen. --But thou, my Queen,
Not for itself, but through thy living love
For one to whom I made it o'er his grave

Sacred, accept this old imperfect tale,
New-old, and shadowing Sense at war with Soul,
Ideal manhood closed in real man,
Rather than that gray king, whose name, a ghost,
Streams like a cloud, man-shaped, from mountain peak,
And cleaves to cairn and cromlech still; or him
Of Geoffrey's book, or him of Malleor's, one
Touched by the adulterous finger of a time
That hovered between war and wantonness,
And crownings and dethronements: take withal
Thy poet's blessing, and his trust that Heaven
Will blow the tempest in the distance back
From thine and ours: for some are sacred, who mark,
Or wisely or unwisely, signs of storm,
Waverings of every vane with every wind,
And wordy trucklings to the transient hour,
And fierce or careless looseners of the faith,
And Softness breeding scorn of simple life,
Or Cowardice, the child of lust for gold,
Or Labour, with a groan and not a voice,
Or Art with poisonous honey stolen from France,
And that which knows, but careful for itself,
And that which knows not, ruling that which knows
To its own harm: the goal of this great world
Lies beyond sight: yet--if our slowly-grown
And crowned Republic's crowning common-sense,
That saved her many times, not fail--their fears
Are morning shadows huger than the shapes
That cast them, not those gloomier which forego
The darkness of that battle in the West,
Where all of high and holy dies away.

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[376 / 127]

[The image depicts a surreal scene with a central pyramid-like structure that appears to be made of stone or concrete. The pyramid is illuminated by a bright, radiant light source that emanates from the top, creating a halo effect around the structure. The light source is surrounded by a swirling, colorful pattern that suggests a cosmic or magical atmosphere. Surrounding the pyramid are three smaller pyramids, each with a similar design and color scheme. The background is a gradient of purple and pink hues, with a gradient of blue at the bottom, suggesting a twilight or dawn setting. The overall composition of the image conveys a sense of mystery and wonder, with the central pyramid being the focal point. There are no discernible texts or inscriptions within the image. The style of the image is digital art, with a focus on surreal and fantastical elements.]

65KiB, 600x600, Pyramid.jpg

[View Same](#) [Google](#) [iqdb](#) [SauceNAO](#) [Trace](#)

Knowledge Bomb. Truman Show Anonymous5 !!9O2tecpDHQ6 ID:uLKrcwL4 Sun 15 Jan 20:11:33 2017 No.107255602 [ViewReplyOriginalReport](#)

Quoted By: >>107255715 >>107256539 >>107256720 >>107257040 >>107257066
>>107257118 >>107257121 >>107257260 >>107257501 >>107258096 >>107258368
>>107258929 >>107259460 >>107259654 >>107259666 >>107260297 >>107260370
>>107260723 >>107260884 >>107261353 >>107261609 >>107261706 >>107261836
>>107261967 >>107262030 >>107262728 >>107263069 >>107263273 >>107263320
>>107263466 >>107264413 >>107265160 >>107265415 >>107266062 >>107266633
>>107266764 >>107266884 >>107268793

Celebs truly do exist in a different reality then the public. It's not "Fame & Fortune", but rather something more darker.

The Truman Show film(which everyone should watch) revealed the truth to the public about the artificial lives Celebs live. They are born & bred, have handlers all there lives & if they try to escape/tell the truth/go off script or they are not profitable(or could be), the "show" gets Canceled.(I've talked about the Truman Show in previous threads)

No Celebs are "Discovered", instead they are products of Hollywood Swinger/Breeder parties & Selective breeding("Bulls & Mares"(Bulls Breed, Mares get Bred)) that are placed with/around people who are part of the Truman Show that shape there path of

life to Hollywood. The lives they live are kept in a bubble pretty much. Celebs have so many children that many of them who don't get into Hollywood lead normal lives having no idea who they are actually related too.

Celeb DNA is a big business. Sperm,Eggs, Kids, etc. There are actually people who breed/crossbreed Celeb DNA kids, much like Animal hobbyists do to get new combinations.

If you consider things like Surrogates & "Adoption" combined with all this information, you will understand how the Truman Show gets a Fresh stock of people for breeding & for Hollywood Celebs.

Hollywood/Celebs & there children all need DNA tests & Paternity Tests. The Truman Show & its breeding program(which is also linked to the Porn Industry in some ways) needs to be exposed.

Anonymous5 !!9O2tecpDHQ6 ID:uLKrcwL4 Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:11:50 No.107255638 Report

PAST THREADS TO DIG INTO:

<http://archive.4plebs.org/pol/search/subject/knowledge%20bomb/username/anonymous5/tripcode/%21%219O2tecpDHQ6/>

Anonymous ID:fECc0Z5/ Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:12:26 No.107255715 Report

Quoted By: >>107255846

>>107255602

don't forget v1 that i found which was under different name

View SameGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace 1477339914978.jpg, 93KiB, 750x910

Anonymous ID:7Yj7i1KN Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:13:23 No.107255834 Report

Quoted By: >>107256221 >>107262473

ayy

Anonymous5 !!9O2tecpDHQ6 ID:uLKrcwL4 Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:13:28 No.107255846 Report

Quoted By: >>107256150

>>107255715

You did? Nice.

Anonymous ID:0FLP5uQQ Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:14:08 No.107255934 Report

Quoted By: >>107256016

This is off topic of this thread but do you have any reading recommendations anon5?

View SameGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace 1469490816449.jpg, 108KiB, 782x782

[The image is a stylized cartoon illustration of a man with a beard and a black hat. The man has a large, open mouth with a red tongue sticking out, and his eyes are wide and red. He is wearing a white shirt and is leaning forward with his hands clasped together in front of him. The background is plain white, and there are no texts or additional elements in the image. The style of the illustration is reminiscent of traditional comic book or cartoon art, with a focus on exaggeration and caricature.]

Anonymous ID:mXJHB8M8 Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:14:32 No.107255977 Report

Quoted By: >>107256221

Anonymous5 !!9O2tecpDHQ6 ID:uLKrcwL4 Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:14:51 No.107256016 Report

Quoted By: >>107256355

>>107255934

I get asked this, and my answer has always been I don't have any.

Anonymous ID:fECc0Z5/ Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:15:53 No.107256150 Report

Quoted By: >>107256221

>>107255846

yes, this one

<http://archive.4plebs.org/pol/thread/89123693/#89123693>

Anonymous5 !!9O2tecpDHQ6 ID:uLKrcwL4 Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:16:23 No.107256221 Report

Quoted By: >>107256523

>>107255977

>>107255834

Truman Show is very real.

>>107256150

Nice.

Anonymous ID:T5Np/yRq Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:17:28 No.107256355 Report

Quoted By: >>107256467

>>107256016

just curious, but do you have any knowledge about Thai politics? With the current king dead months ago and the new one having so much weaker presence, I'm not certain what direction the wind of blowing.

Anonymous5 !!9O2tecpDHQ6 ID:uLKrcwL4 Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:18:26 No.107256467 Report

>>107256355

I would be watching what China is upto interms of Regional power plays.

Anonymous ID:fECc0Z5/ Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:18:59 No.107256523 Report

>>107256221

that's because you wasn't using tripcode and had different title so it isn't covered in the search

Anonymous ID:dN/ciM66 Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:19:05 No.107256539 Report

Quoted By: >>107256734

>>107255602

Unlike some of your past threads, this one makes no sense whatsoever.

You are jumping the shark, Anon5.

Anonymous ID:qtEBdk0K Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:20:29 No.107256720 Report

Quoted By: >>107256907

>>107255602

So when are we going to start our own Aryan super-soldier program?

Anonymous5 !!9O2tecpDHQ6 ID:uLKrcwL4 Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:20:33 No.107256734 Report

Quoted By: >>107256986 >>107257018 >>107257697

>>107256539

It actually makes complete sense if you looked into Hollywood/Celebs.

I've been talking about this subject for a while in my threads. It was high time to make a thread about it & especially due to how Celebs are acting stupid lately.

View SameGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace 1459701460007.jpg, 29KiB, 500x364

[The image is a close-up photograph of a black dog with a white face and nose. The dog's eyes are wide open, and its expression is one of mild annoyance or confusion. The dog's ears are perked up, and its fur appears to be of a dark color, possibly black or a deep shade of brown. The background of the image is blurred, but it suggests an indoor setting with a glimpse of a kitchen or living area. There are no visible texts or discernible brands in the image. The style of the image is candid and appears to be taken in a home environment.]

Anonymous ID:7MGRhr3k Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:21:41 No.107256877 Report

Quoted By: >>107257023 >>107257392

Once again this faggot LARPing mongoloid creates the same thread and spouts nothing but vagary and bullshit.

Are you that starved for attention that you need random asshats on /pol/ to validate your existence ?

Literally, physically, mentally and metaphorically hang yourself

Anonymous5 !!9O2tecpDHQ6 ID:uLKrcwL4 Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:21:52 No.107256907 Report

Quoted By: >>107257759 >>107260322 >>107266383

>>107256720

You know all those missing Children?

They are either dead/killed, put in the sex trade or used for experiments.

View SameOCRGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace nro1.jpg, 32KiB, 584x416

Anonymous ID:WcsMdBmg Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:21:59 No.107256922 Report

Quoted By: >>107257023

What do you know about the NRO?

<https://youtu.be/Zl8QOstaCil>

Anonymous ID:dN/ciM66 Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:22:32 No.107256986 Report

Quoted By: >>107257129

>>107256734

List the names of some of the celebrities that were bred the way you described.

Anonymous ID:aHTMy3j6 Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:22:47 No.107257018 Report

>>107256734

Only looks stupid when taken out of context. I'd prefer saying they acted like a hive mind reading the same script.

Anonymous5 !!9O2tecpDHQ6 ID:uLKrcwL4 Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:22:50 No.107257023 Report

Quoted By: >>107257197 >>107257516 >>107257536 >>107257613 >>107258347 >>107256877

Hello Shill, right on time.

>>107256922

Well first of all, is that information up to date?

View SameGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace celebs3.png, 428KiB, 570x518

Anonymous ID:vM5faN6Y Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:22:57 No.107257040 Report

Quoted By: >>107257129 >>107257909 >>107258195 >>107259021 >>107255602

>There are actually people who breed/crossbreed Celeb DNA kids, much like Animal hobbyists do to get new combinations.

You can see how many celebs look like each other and previous celebs. Movies stars, singers, porn, sports, etc.

Find their handlers and how the Media Groups are inter-related.

Currently looking into Scooter Braun and RBMG, and all the studios like Def Jam and Vivendi that have worked together, traded stars, and "found" new stars.

Many celebs have divorced parents, or their moms used to sleep around (probably in Swingers clubs, like Joi and Sanctum). Bieber is an example of this, I believe.

Looking into which celebs have donated/frozen their eggs is another lead.

Anonymous ID:1Rvo5ydz Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:23:11 No.107257066 Report

Quoted By: >>107257307 >>107257392 >>107255602

>this thread again

Anonymous ID:a/gpSeVy Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:23:35 No.107257118 Report

Quoted By: >>107257693 >>107255602

How far back does this program go? For example, was John Wayne a product of these breeding programs and did he also live a similar artificial life?

Anonymous ID:9t8t1haN Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:23:37 No.107257121 Report

Quoted By: >>107257307 >>107257392 >>107255602

Fucking larping faggot, get the fuck out of here.

Anonymous5 !!9O2tecpDHQ6 ID:uLKrcwL4 Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:23:44 No.107257129 Report

Quoted By: >>107257344 >>107256986

Many, especially the newer ones.

>>107257040

Exactly.

Anonymous ID:WcsMdBmg Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:24:22 No.107257197 Report

>>107257023

I dont know, I meant about the symbolism in their patches.

Anonymous ID:i91kLYMR Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:24:49 No.107257260 Report

Quoted By: >>107257392

>>107255602

Shut the fuck up. You are so full of shit.

Anonymous5 !!9O2tecpDhq6 ID:uLKrcwL4 Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:25:04 No.107257307 Report

Quoted By: >>107257823

>>107257066

>>107257121

Shill attack group right on time.

Anonymous ID:dN/ciM66 Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:25:22 No.107257344 Report

Quoted By: >>107257693

>>107257129

Say the names and justify the answer, or whatever you say means nothing.

Anonymous5 !!9O2tecpDhq6 ID:uLKrcwL4 Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:25:44 No.107257392 Report

Quoted By: >>107257960

>>107257260

>>107257121

>>107257066

>>107256877

Shills are very upset that I got Information about the Truman Show out.

Anonymous ID:D4s/FHf2 Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:25:50 No.107257409 Report

Quoted By: >>107258136 >>107258882

Does this apply to all celebrities or just the white/white-washed ones? How do you explain all the rappers that grew up in "tha hood"? Do you really think their mamas would keep quiet about banging some celebrity and raising a superstar?

Anonymous ID:vkm8Zh+1 Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:26:36 No.107257501 Report

Quoted By: >>107257797

>>107255602

I just realized something.

I really need to stop coming to this website.

View SameOCRGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace nrol-39-mission-patch.jpg, 48KiB, 299x300

[The image features a circular emblem with a dark background and a border that transitions from dark to light purple. At the top of the emblem, the text "NROL-39" is

prominently displayed in white capital letters. Below this, in a larger font size, the phrase "NOTHING IS BEYOND OUR REACH" is written in white capital letters. Centered within the emblem is a graphic of an octopus with its tentacles spread out. The octopus is depicted in a stylized manner, with its body and tentacles rendered in a yellow hue, and its head and tentacles in a darker shade of yellow. The octopus is oriented towards the right side of the emblem, with its body facing the viewer. The overall style of the emblem is reminiscent of a space mission patch, with the octopus possibly symbolizing exploration or discovery. The text and the octopus are the main elements of the emblem, and their placement suggests a thematic connection to space exploration or marine exploration.]

Anonymous ID:2BTpux4a Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:26:42 No.107257516 Report

>>107257023

Anonymous ID:lc06w7XE Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:26:50 No.107257536 Report

>>107257023

No. He is right. You talk alot but say nothing. Deepak chopra like. You call everyone a shill too.

Anonymous ID:iS2pwmvP Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:27:06 No.107257576 Report

Quoted By: >>107257797

>to smart to know when to use their instead of there

View SameGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace 1454698747047.jpg, 6KiB, 275x183

Anonymous ID:7MGRhr3k Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:27:18 No.107257613 Report

Quoted By: >>107257797 >>107269019

>>107257023

Bruv

You really think shills give a shit about you ? you're a worthless sack of LARPing shit.

You're demonstrably stupid, your writing is terrible and you WILL die alone.

Anonymous5 !!9O2tecpDHQ6 ID:uLKrcwL4 Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:27:59 No.107257693 Report

Quoted By: >>107261586

>>107257344

>>107257118

Look at the rise in Hollywood popularity all the way to now.

Movies,TV,Music.....

All "Discovered" and new Celebs you see are part of & results of the system

Take a look at Disney Shows & all those Child Actors.

Anonymous ID:1/ylpJrs Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:28:00 No.107257697 Report

Quoted By: >>107258136

>>107256734

So if they've got all these celebs acting like retards and accidentally redpilling people against listening to them, I take it they don't breed based around intelligence?

But if this is going on there has to be something related to genetics. Is it to do with (((them))) like business as usual or something deeper?

Anonymous ID:qtEBdk0K Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:28:33 No.107257759 Report

Quoted By: >>107258136

>>107256907

Oh I know that.

When are the good guys going to get an army of their own?

How can we even compete?

Anonymous5 !!9O2tecpDHQ6 ID:uLKrcwL4 Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:28:51 No.107257797 Report

Quoted By: >>107258124

>>107257576

>>107257613

>>107257501

More Shills are being rallied to attack.

They do not want this information to get out.

Anonymous ID:i91kLYMR Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:29:03 No.107257823 Report

Quoted By: >>107258567

>>107257307

You claim the most insane shit on 4chan and don't provide ANY evidence. Most of the over the top conspiratorial retards on here at least have at least one youtube video that vaguely backs up their claims. You provide NOTHING. Nothing.

What scares me is that people take you seriously. What reason have you given them?

They eat this shit up like it's their last meal.

View SameGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace 1471164910109.jpg, 72KiB, 466x700

[The image is a close-up photograph of a rabbit with a surprised expression. The rabbit has large, round, dark eyes and a small, pointed nose. Its ears are erect, and it appears to be looking directly at the camera. The rabbit's fur is a mix of brown and gray, and it has a fluffy, soft texture. The background is blurred, making the rabbit the main focus of the image. There is a hint of smoke or mist in the background, suggesting the presence of a source of light or a light source. The lighting in the image is soft and diffused, creating a warm tone. There are no texts or discernible brands in the image. The style of the image is artistic and surreal, with a focus on the rabbit's surprised expression.]

Anonymous ID:PQq9yJsm Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:29:41 No.107257909 Report

Quoted By: >>107258237

>>107257040

Holy fuck, is Emma Stone literally Lohan v.2? Like they fucked up v.1 badly, let's learn from our mistakes and see how much better v.2 turns out...

View SameGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace 10296469_682911418410854_6360337

(...).jpg, 149KiB, 1280x1024

Anonymous ID:81Sj635x Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:30:02 No.107257960 Report

Quoted By: >>107258567

>>107257392

anywhere outside the archives to read about this without your mentioning it getting said info pulled?

what would you selectively breed for here??

Looks obviously aren't the reason, nor is intelligence. What companies should one research in connection to this, and how important is PAX2?

Anonymous ID:l5jToeEq Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:31:00 No.107258087 Report

Quoted By: >>107258567

yo anon5, was waiting for your thread. good stuff as always.

quick unrelated question, don't know if it was coverd. who created cicada 3301 and what was its point?

View SameGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace image.gif, 2MiB, 310x175

Anonymous ID:jloa1gwm Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:31:03 No.107258096 Report

Quoted By: >>107266314

>>107255602

Explain Justin bieber you fucking RP faggot. Go to /X. This shit is the worst kind of fucking cancer you're worst than kek and bog posters when you those shitty knowledge bomb threads with that even shittier macro. GO THE FUCK BACK TO /X/ YOU KIKE FAGGOT PIECE OF NIGGER SHIT

View SameGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace 1463947566178.jpg, 31KiB, 313x286

[The image is a close-up photograph of a dog's face. The dog has a light brown coat with darker brown patches, and its eyes are wide open, giving it a curious expression. The dog's mouth is open, revealing its teeth, and its tongue is visible, which is pink in color. The dog appears to be looking directly at the camera, with its ears perked up. The background of the image is blurred, suggesting that the focus is on the dog. There are no discernible texts or other objects in the image. The style of the image is candid and appears to be taken in a natural setting, possibly outdoors.]

Anonymous ID:7MGRhr3k Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:31:17 No.107258124 Report

Quoted By: >>107258330 >>107258567

>>107257797

>They do not want this information to get out

Why don't you give us the info then ?

Give names

Point us down the same avenues of investigation

Prove you're not a LARPing faggot

Anonymous5 !l9O2tecpDHQ6 ID:uLKrcwL4 Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:31:22 No.107258136 Report

Quoted By: >>107258882 >>107259761 >>107267336

>>107257409

1) Both.

2) Yes.

>>107257697

1) Looks & Ability.

2) The influence of Hollywood over the Public, also you should read up on my previous threads.

>>107257759

1) It exists in many forms.

2) Look at the power merely this site has.

View SameOCRGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace 1361409734558.jpg, 261KiB, 1862x967

The Bumpster ID:+KpuhMdQ Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:31:32 No.107258158 Report

Are there artifacts on the moon that were left by another civilization?

Anonymous ID:C+zpcuMG Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:31:49 No.107258195 Report

>>107257040

This is legit creepy. This needs to be exposed. Hollywood as a whole must be stopped.

View SameOCRGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace celebs4.png, 431KiB, 570x518

Anonymous ID:vM5faN6Y Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:32:07 No.107258237 Report

Quoted By: >>107259666 >>107267620

>>107257909

Right? I am curious about people like Hilary Duff and Dylan/Cole Sprouse, who did their shows/music when young and then disappeared.

Why were they different? How did they say "no more," and then go on to lead lives outside of Hollywood? What did NOT happen to them, and why?

View SameGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace ss+(2016-11-19+at+09.00.02).jpg, 4KiB, 64x73

Anonymous ID:inJqVuv5 Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:32:34 No.107258306 Report

Quoted By: >>107258803

>post vague retarded shit

>shout 'hahahaha le shill proving i'm rite !!!' everytime people call him out for being a larping faggot

hope you get some help

Anonymous ID:jloa1gwm Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:32:43 No.107258330 Report

>>107258124

He can't. The point of celebrity culture is to entice everyday Americans with the thoughts that this could be you. You could be rich famous and loved by millions for just playing a character on tv or a singing a song. This is actually the exact opposite of the point of Hollywood.

Anonymous ID:C+zpcuMG Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:32:50 No.107258347 Report

Quoted By: >>107258453 >>107258803

>>107257023

Is Pizzagate merely a small piece to this collective monster?

Anonymous ID:51pg3wLS Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:33:02 No.107258368 Report

Quoted By: >>107258803

>>107255602

Do you have an idea if anything big will happen on the 20th?

Anonymous ID:jloa1gwm Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:33:45 No.107258453 Report

>>107258347

The hands of Dan anon they're cold and you say they're worth it but when you wake up 28 bald with a new baby married to a wiggger you'll know it wasn't worth it

Anonymous5 !!9O2tecpDHQ6 ID:uLKrcwL4 Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:34:35 No.107258567 Report

Quoted By: >>107258808 >>107259118 >>107259897

>>107258124

Look up Celebs like Bieber, all the "popular ones", the Disney Channel Kids, etc

All Celebs are part of the system in some way.

>>107258087

Would have to look into it.

>>107257960

1) I already explained alot in the OP.

2) Looks, ability, etc.

>>107257823

I always tell people to Research & Observe.

Look, as I've always said. I'm here to get Information out.

Anonymous5 !!9O2tecpDHQ6 ID:uLKrcwL4 Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:35:01 No.107258632 Report

PAST THREADS TO DIG INTO:

<http://archive.4plebs.org/pol/search/subject/knowledge%20bomb/username/anonymous5/tripcode/%21%219O2tecpDHQ6/>

Anonymous5 !!9O2tecpDHQ6 ID:uLKrcwL4 Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:36:17 No.107258803 Report

Quoted By: >>107259395 >>107268034

>>107258347

Yes.

People should have been looking into hollywood much sooner.

>>107258368

Soros funded groups are going to try to cause shit & distract the defending forces.

>>107258306

You skills are just terrible at your jobs.

Anonymous ID:i91kLYMR Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:36:19 No.107258808 Report

Quoted By: >>107259081

>>107258567

What you do is jump to conclusions.

Anonymous ID:WcsMdBmg Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:36:20 No.107258811 Report

Quoted By: >>107259081

Is english being a green language and considered the language of the birds related to your Dinosaurs=birds angle?Are the archon reptillians as interpreted by David Icke et al actually avians?

View SameOCRGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace Hollywood.png, 29KiB, 561x366

Anonymous ID:vM5faN6Y Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:36:55 No.107258882 Report

Quoted By: >>107259362

>>107257409

>>107258136

>Do you really think their mamas would keep quiet about banging some celebrity and raising a superstar?

Their mothers often either get money, fame, or probably occasionally threats. A lot of them grew up poor/divorced/degenerate, so they'll keep their mouths shut as long as they get a comfy Hollywood life while their kids bring in the money.

Anonymous ID:IP8LQvbE Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:37:19 No.107258929 Report

Quoted By: >>107259362

>>107255602

So is Trump going to drain the swamp in Hollywood or not? I mean, he has to know they're a cancer and just as much an issue as DC is, right?

View SameOCRGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace 1483156742495.png, 94KiB, 800x800

Anonymous ID:67sY2otc Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:37:59 No.107259021 Report

Quoted By: >>107259302 >>107259362 >>107260121

>>107257040

All your pic proves is that Hollywood Jews love to diddle the same type of white girl.

Anonymous5 !!9O2tecpDHQ6 ID:uLKrcwL4 Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:38:29 No.107259081 Report

Quoted By: >>107259316

>>107258808

Never do, its called having good information & sources.

>>107258811

1) Dinosaurs have always had feathers/quills on them. The "Saur" just means old or Lizard, which is incorrect since Dinosaurs are Birds.

I've explained this many of times.

2) Reptilians are a psy-op

Anonymous ID:XTo7WTui Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:38:37 No.107259091 Report

Quoted By: >>107259745

Hey Anon5

1)What is the truth about princess Diana's death? or just an accident?

2)Are there celebrities who entered Hollywood normally? like, very rare exceptions in which they aren't controlled?

3)Are celebs like Chuck Norris, Arnold, Mel Gibson Mike Tyson etc. who supported Trump/were silent in this election, part of the Truman show or they entered normally and are legit? also anything on the above celebs?

4)If there are celebs who entered legit and not part of this Truman puppetry, are they aware of it and the pedo stuff, and if yes, are they told to shut up? Do some of them don't mind the Truman and actually join the pedo parties, or basically are invited?

5)Anything on Meryl Streep ? She did go against Trump hard with her bullshit speech. She must have skeletons if she thinks Roman Polanski is a good guy(raped a 13 year old girl, still free)

Also, Mel Gibson and Vince Vaughn didn't look happy when listening to her speech. Anything on them?

View SameGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace 1467635268281.jpg, 122KiB, 640x640

[The image is a close-up photograph of a dog wearing a green beanie and a plaid shirt. The dog has a light brown coat with a darker brown muzzle and a white chest. Its eyes are focused directly on the camera, and its mouth is slightly open. The background is blurred, suggesting an outdoor setting with trees and a wooden fence. The dog's expression is neutral, and there are no visible texts or logos in the image. The style of the image is a candid, real-life photograph with a focus on the dog's appearance and expression.]

Anonymous ID:7MGRhr3k Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:38:47 No.107259118 Report

>>107258567

You've got nothing but vague bullshit

No proof

Fuck this thread, I'm gonna read a book

Anonymous ID:+HMIaVga Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:39:23 No.107259212 Report

Quoted By: >>107259695 >>107259745

Is it just secluded to Hollywood, or are we all living in some kind of Truman Show? Been along time since you revealed it, hope we get to understand it after this.

Anonymous ID:q02zy4MG Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:40:00 No.107259291 Report

Quoted By: >>107259745

How far back in time does the Truman show in Hollowood go?

View SameGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace JB_AG2.png, 618KiB, 813x814

Anonymous ID:vM5faN6Y Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:40:03 No.107259302 Report

Quoted By: >>107259745

>>107259021

Maybe, and how do you think they get MORE of the same kind of girls?

Surrogacy, raising up children around the country and world that are actually related to previous stars. Then they will have the looks/talent that the breeders are looking for.

Always more fodder, more talent for the masses' bread and circus.

Anonymous ID:i91kLYMR Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:40:10 No.107259316 Report

Quoted By: >>107259745

>>107259081

Then provide a list of your sources. I can't even believe that you would say this considering this lacking is what I initially criticized you on.

Anonymous5 !!9O2tecpDHQ6 ID:uLKrcwL4 Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:40:31 No.107259362 Report

Quoted By: >>107261951

>>107258882

Bingo.

>>107258929

Hollywood is freaking out over T for a reason.

>>107259021

You need to read the JC psy-op thread:

<http://archive.4plebs.org/pol/search/subject/knowledge%20bomb/username/anonymous5/tripcode/%21%219O2tecpDHQ6/>

Also, as I said, "Bulls & Mares".

Anonymous ID:1/ylpJrs Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:40:47 No.107259395 Report

Quoted By: >>107259703 >>107260075

>>107258803

I appreciate you getting this information out mate, /pol/ dropped the ball in not looking into pedowood sooner but we'll get there.

Thing is though /pol/ seems to need a kick in the ass to get it into gear, do you think theres many hollywood insiders trying to get this stuff out? (Corey Feldman, Elijah Wood, etc) or even people in the new Trump establishment that might take action?

Anonymous ID:jl8ond1p Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:41:07 No.107259445 Report

Quoted By: >>107260075

What happens to the entertainment industry after all this gets revealed?

Less degeneracy hopefully?

Anonymous ID:eKWovUik Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:41:17 No.107259460 Report

Quoted By: >>107262166

>>107255602

This is entirely false. Stop making these irreverent threads all the time you misinformed faggot.

Anonymous ID:iCXfaulyL Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:42:54 No.107259654 Report

Quoted By: >>107260075

>>107255602

holy shit, YOU'RE JAY DYER!

love your book m8

View SameGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace 1483148738887.jpg, 114KiB, 1200x900

[The image is a candid photograph of two men in formal attire, likely attending a formal event. The man on the left is wearing a black tuxedo with a white shirt and a black bow tie, and he is holding a cigarette in his mouth. The man on the right is also dressed in a black tuxedo, but his shirt is not visible, and he is looking directly at the camera with a serious expression. The background is blurred, suggesting the focus is on the two men. There are no discernible texts or logos in the image. The style of the image is realistic and appears to be taken in a candid moment during the event.]

Anonymous ID:PQq9yJsm Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:43:00 No.107259666 Report

Quoted By: >>107259915 >>107260075

>>107258237

I can only speculate...Possibly some enter the scene from the outside, and get blackballed from getting into the most inner circle? Hush money? Who knows...

>>107255602

>>106716401

>Anon5 says they're the weakest link in the whole corrupt cabal of pedos/satanists.

Your thoughts?

>>106719384

>No, this type of thinking is fairly absurd. There have been major pedophile scandals at the highest levels every few years for decades now. Anon5 is probably fairly young and speculative and doesn't appreciate that these sorts of things have happened over and over again.

HLL commented this about you Anon5 the other day, do you have a rebuttal or response?

View SameGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace Jackman.jpg, 144KiB, 600x900

[The image is a candid photograph taken outdoors during daylight. It features a group of people gathered around a large, rectangular, white structure that appears to be a coffin or sarcophagus. The coffin is partially submerged in water, and the body inside is covered with a layer of what looks like a glossy, brown substance, possibly wax or paint. The person inside the coffin is lying on their back, with their hands and feet visible. In the foreground, there is a person wearing a black hat and a white shirt, standing to the left of the coffin. This individual is facing the camera and appears to be observing the scene. To the right of the coffin, there is another person wearing a red shirt and a black hat, who is standing and facing the same direction as the person in the black hat. In the background, there is a building with a red roof and a white facade, partially obscured by

the people and the coffin. The sky is clear, and the overall atmosphere suggests a casual, outdoor event or gathering. There are no visible texts or discernible brands in the image.]

Anonymous ID:VM5faN6Y Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:43:12 No.107259695 Report
>>107259212

I'd say a lot of us are living in some kind of control, if you look at advertisements and such. This is what data collection does, allows more control of the masses. I did the Truman Show Challenge and watched the movie every day for a week. Didn't really notice any big changes or odd coincidences in my life, so I doubt I'm destined for stardom. BUT they could have gotten better at controlling.....

Anonymous ID:jl8ond1p Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:43:13 No.107259697 Report

Quoted By: >>107260075 >>107260323

What do you make of redpilled celebs like Jon Voigt?

Are they from the outside of it or successfully escaped?

Anonymous ID:IP8LQvbE Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:43:14 No.107259703 Report
>>107259395

They need a Kefauver Committee to investigate Hollywood.

Actually, they probably need a Committee to also go over government corruption for the past 40 years in general.

Anonymous5 !!9O2tecpDHQ6 ID:uLKrcwL4 Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:43:37 No.107259745 Report

Quoted By: >>107260038 >>107260305 >>107261419
>>107259212

I explained it in the OP.

>>107259316

"provide your sources"

Nice try.

Sources for things can't always be put openly on a site like this.

>>107259091

1) "Accident"

2) Yes, but very rare due to how effective the Truman Show is.

3) Normally.

4) Yes & Yes

5) The fact that she defending a Pedo should tell you everything you need to know.

6) Both came from outside the system.

>>107259291

Look back at when Hollywood became popular.

>>107259302

Bingo

Anonymous ID:2leqhVk4 Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:43:44 No.107259761 Report

Quoted By: >>107260726

>>107258136

>M-Many, especially the new ones

>R-read up on my previous threads

Anon5, I like you but you act like a fucking retard mate. You need to give us concrete stuff. Something we can truly grasp onto. Plus, you can't expect to not be attacked if you don't provide solid names.

Just name one fucking actor.

Anonymous ID:b2UGhOKE Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:44:03 No.107259810 Report

Quoted By: >>107260726

Who fucking cares.

Here's a real idea, stop paying to them.

Celebrities are losers.

If no one paid attention, they'd be nobodies like everyone else

View SameGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace 1484463399033.jpg, 61KiB, 600x536

[The image is a stylized cartoon illustration featuring a character with a large, open beak. The character has a bright, glowing eye and a pair of sunglasses that reflect light, giving the impression of a sun or a bright light source. The character's eyes are wide open, and the mouth is slightly open, suggesting a sense of surprise or excitement. The character's head is tilted slightly to the left, and the background is a gradient of blue, transitioning from a lighter shade at the top to a darker shade at the bottom. The overall style of the image is cartoonish and expressive, with a focus on the character's expressive features and the bright, glowing eyes. There are no texts or other discernible objects in the image.]

Anonymous ID:81Sj635x Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:44:40 No.107259897 Report

Quoted By: >>107260726

>>107258567

my bad.

how serious is the ritualistic part of this??

can we get leads by convincing those in hollywood who want to talk about this to share more, or will they be killed for that?

Do you know anything about Kek or Thoth that might be relevant at this time? or even irrelevant?

Anonymous ID:IP8LQvbE Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:44:49 No.107259915 Report

Quoted By: >>107260726 >>107260967

>>107259666

Checked. That was me asking HLI btw, Anon5 thinks he's a honeypot/fraud.

Anonymous ID:JZDIXhsV Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:45:21 No.107259989 Report

Quoted By: >>107260726

You mentioned McCain helping his daughter. What do you mean, did he pay for her boob job? (Btw are they real?) How does McCain help her and why should I care? Or do you mean that he pimped her out To get ahead, as we've heard with others?

- There's nothing new here A5, other than saying that the ones who don't make it, just live normal lives, not knowing. You need to up your game. Can't see the difference between what your doing, and what you accuse George Webb of doing, trickling info out. If he's a honeypot or shill etc, show us why you're not. This isn't it. Give us something good. There's nothing here you haven't said before, a pattern? Are you the same anon5 who posted about 9/11, Soros etc. a long time ago? Your material was more interesting and less repetitive then.

The Schumers was a start last time, surprised no one followed up. Tell me more about them. They are part of Hollywood, they are part of pizza gate I assume, what angles can we look into there?

Anonymous ID:QnYLNFBu Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:45:42 No.107260038 Report

Quoted By: >>107260726

>>107259745

>saging your cancer

Sources are a must mate.

Anonymous5 !!9O2tecpDHQ6 ID:uLKrcwL4 Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:45:58 No.107260075 Report

Quoted By: >>107260226 >>107260548 >>107260731 >>107260967

>>107259666

HLI is a fraud/honeypot.

>>107259395

If you start exposing this shit now, its going to make bringing down the Pedo network alot easier.

>>107259445

1) More like, what does the public now think?

2) Hopefully.

>>107259654

I have no idea who that is & I haven't wrote any books.

>>107259697

Both.

Anonymous ID:07jyqT/j Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:46:16 No.107260115 Report

Quoted By: >>107260960 >>107261158

This is what happened to Kanye right? He started being pro-Trump and got 5150'd.
View SameGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace 4OP.jpg, 31KiB, 600x599

Anonymous ID:qXhYTkZS Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:46:19 No.107260121 Report

Quoted By: >>107260422

>>107259021

not even that

it proves that there is some standard of beauty, and those that are closer to it get recognized for it

anon5 faggot as usual, post nice lamps

Anonymous ID:RAUiyaAJ Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:46:49 No.107260177 Report

Quoted By: >>107261158

Are you familiar with Donald Marshall OP? He claims there are cloning centres in Hollywood run by Reptilians. I think a lot of what you're saying is plausible, and leans towards the rational side. I believe what actually happens is slightly crazier than how you made it sound and more complex. It doesn't take a genius to see there's genetic manipulation going on over there.

Either way, keep up the good work.

Anonymous ID:iCXfauyL Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:47:11 No.107260226 Report

>>107260075

>not jay

than youre a plagiarist

Anonymous ID:aj/6LHIK Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:47:40 No.107260297 Report

Quoted By: >>107261158

>>107255602

I'm not saying you are necessarily wrong, but you have no proof whatsoever.

Anonymous ID:+HMIaVga Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:47:44 No.107260305 Report

Quoted By: >>107261158

>>107259745

Thank you for answering. It's what I hope you ment.

Anonymous ID:JZDIXhsV Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:47:52 No.107260322 Report

Quoted By: >>107261158

>>107256907

What kind of experiments. Who does them, and where? Who benefits and how?

Anonymous ID:IP8LQvbE Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:47:53 No.107260323 Report

>>107259697

Actually, that's a good question. What IS the deal with Jon Voigt Anon5? He seems redpilled, but his daughter clearly got sucked into the weird shit in Hollywood. Did he

just have her stolen out from him and corrupted?

View SameGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace awesomelamp.jpg, 11KiB, 350x315

Anonymous ID:qXhYTkZS Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:48:03 No.107260349 Report

Quoted By: >>107260731

>there is massive conspiracy I, namefaggot, decided to share with you and everybody who disagrees is a shill

>proofs? What proofs? Just look for yourself, it is all there!

Anonymous ID:M1PnzUI8 Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:48:11 No.107260370 Report

Quoted By: >>107261158

>>107255602

Didn't California have an Eugenics program back in the day? That would be where to start looking.

>https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eugenics_in_California

Anonymous ID:QnYLNFBU Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:48:39 No.107260422 Report

Quoted By: >>107260658

>>107260121

Thoth post of reason

View SameGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace cbb6ce7c34f9cdfbfa05172e13bcb56d.jpg, 7KiB, 236x236

Anonymous ID:qXhYTkZS Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:49:30 No.107260530 Report

oh and if someone asks questions that I do not like I will ignore him

t. anon5

Anonymous ID:eKWovUik Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:49:38 No.107260548 Report

Quoted By: >>107261158

>>107260075

You have a severe lack of understanding in how the real world works. You make these pretentious threads to ego stroke yourself by corroding some of the permissable minds into thinking your some enlightened yogi when in all totality you are a fucking moron. Get some zoloft and ambilify to treat your delusions or better yet, take a razor and slice your wrists vertically.

Anonymous ID:jl8ond1p Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:50:07 No.107260609 Report

Quoted By: >>107261158 >>107264091

Why did Trump love to hang around celebrities so much if he knew what was going on?

His show is literally called celebrity apprentice.

Anonymous ID:qXhYTkZS Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:50:33 No.107260658 Report

Quoted By: >>107261177

>>107260422

thothposting have CIA backing and works as divide and conquer

Anonymous ID:JZDIXhsV Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:51:07 No.107260723 Report

Quoted By: >>107261158 >>107261303

>>107255602

Who keeps track of the children from the swinger parties? Is there a database, or are there a few, and are there people who keep track of them? Are they sneaky about it or hide it in the open?

Anonymous5 !!9O2tecpDHQ6 ID:uLKrcwL4 Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:51:08 No.107260726 Report

Quoted By: >>107260958 >>107260967 >>107261193 >>107261320 >>107261517
>>107261727 >>107263182
>>107259761

I already gave people leads on here.

Look at all popular Celebs/Artists, the Dinsey Channel kids, etc.

>>107259810

You should care considering how the public worships them like Idols.

>>107259897

The Truman Show is very real.

>>107259989

1) I didn't say "helping", I said he did stuff with her.

2) I see what you are trying to do..... you are trying to downplay the information. Also I always link the archives.

3) They have fucked eachother & Amy got passed around.

>>107260038

Start looking into Hollywood & Disney.

>>107259915

Think? I know.

I've asked actual HLI guys about him, and they can see through his BS.

Anonymous ID:81Sj635x Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:51:11 No.107260731 Report

>>107260349

to be fair, nobody stays in threads they don't care about, and everyone knows that everything on /pol/ is satire.

lighten up!!

>>107260075

Is research into genes like PAX2 worth investigating further? particularly from companies with hollywood connections?

View SameGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace chickenlamp.jpg, 259KiB, 615x503

Anonymous ID:qXhYTkZS Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:51:11 No.107260734 Report

Quoted By: >>107261517

posting more lamps

View SameGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace 1484494110499.jpg, 107KiB, 1279x747

[The image is a photograph of a cat lying in a sink filled with water. The cat is facing the camera and appears to be in a relaxed state, with its head resting on the edge of the sink. The sink is white and has a curved edge. On the left side of the sink, there is a soap dispenser with a yellow label. The sink is positioned in a bathroom setting, with a mirror visible in the background. The cat's fur is predominantly white, with some black markings on its face and legs. The background is dark, which contrasts with the light color of the cat and the sink. There are no visible texts or other objects in the image. The style of the image is candid and appears to be taken in a domestic setting.]

Need Some Autists to Help ID:1bWCkgfl Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:52:22 No.107260877 Report

<https://www.jewtube.com/watch?v=o6yA2hS2bFo>

Anonymous ID:xEu2OmQY Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:52:24 No.107260884 Report

Quoted By: >>107261454 >>107261517 >>107265995
>>107255602

Truman show might be real but we are all truman then.

Earth is flat and im a pilot. If the earth was curved i would have to turn the nose of the plane downwards every kilometer to stay level. Also, i took a gyro onboard and if you know how a gyro operates - it will stay level no matter how you twist it - it should have changed direction. It didnt change 1 degree.

You have been lied to by very very powerful people. Don't shoot the messenger. The Earth is Flat.

Anonymous ID:jl8ond1p Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:52:32 No.107260904 Report

Quoted By: >>107261454

Truman didn't find out he was in the Truman show until the end?

Is that the same with celebrities? What percent of celebs in the show have no idea they're in the show?

View SameGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace cloudlamp.jpg, 6KiB, 236x236

Anonymous ID:qXhYTkZS Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:53:04 No.107260958 Report

>>107260726

is the lamp I posted connected to illuminati?

>illuminaty

>enlightened

>literally lamp function

>lamp shaped as cloud

>God is in Heavens

holy shit I uncovered massive conspiracy, better create bullshit thread on /pol/

Anonymous ID:gX1MNLx2 Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:53:04 No.107260960 Report

Quoted By: >>107261517

>>107260115

Some insight.

I wonder how's his relationship with Jay-Z nowadays, considering they're both standing

at different sides.

Anonymous ID:PQq9yJsm Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:53:07 No.107260967 Report

Quoted By: >>107261279 >>107261454 >>107261517 >>107264136

>>107259915

>>107260075

>>107260726

Thanks... I'm inclined to agree, or at least, HLI drops some nuggets of good info, but I get the feeling the path or objective that person is leading people towards is one that is purposefully made to get people lost.

And just by judging the level of derail shilling present between HLI and Anon5 threads, it's a huge fucking difference, and that should be telling already...

View SameGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace coolasfucklamp.jpg, 74KiB, 630x382

Anonymous ID:qXhYTkZS Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:54:20 No.107261117 Report

Quoted By: >>107263749

Does this lamp is in fact a code on how to awaken antideluvian entities that dwell under Cambodia?

Anonymous5 !!9O2tecDHQ6 ID:uLKrcwL4 Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:54:41 No.107261158 Report

Quoted By: >>107261407 >>107261556 >>107262045 >>107264091 >>107267158

>>107260115

Kanye came from outside of the system & when he started to Rebel(they do this to all Celebs that rebel) he was taken away for it.

>>107260177

Reptilians are a psy-op & there is no cloning going on.

>>107260297

"proof".

Why are you not researching already?

>>107260305

It was really clear by how much the Ambulances screwed around.

>>107260322

Governments, Pharma, etc

>>107260370

Yep & now look at the recent Law that Cali past about Children.

>>107260548

Shill, you are not effective.

>>107260609

To gather information.

>>107260723

People & databases. Sometimes its hidden other times its in plain sight.

Just look at the people.

Anonymous ID:QnYLNFBU Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:54:49 No.107261177 Report

>>107260658

Pfft kek and thoth are on the same side.

My dubbies proved that

Anonymous ID:AO1ntXOo Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:55:00 No.107261193 Report

Quoted By: >>107261650

>>107260726

I agree with caring about celebrities for this reason. One of America's primary exports right now is "culture", propagated through these celebrities.

View SameGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace green.jpg, 5KiB, 225x225

Anonymous ID:qXhYTkZS Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:55:29 No.107261258 Report

Is this lamp connected to lizard people?

It shares their colour scheme

or does electricity a jew lie, and lamps have to be green to produce power by photosynthesis?

Anonymous ID:IP8LQvbE Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:55:37 No.107261279 Report

>>107260967

Yeah I mean I like the bread crumbs about a new technological wave of innovation he loves to give, but then he makes everyone go down blind alleys of esoteric bullshit.

View SameGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace vultures.jpg, 70KiB, 700x495

Anonymous ID:vM5faN6Y Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:55:51 No.107261303 Report

>>107260723

I would bet that the sperm and egg banks, and the people who own the clubs and studios that promote this have some sort of communication about it. Secret companies or contacts that hold all the info. I'd love the get info on DNA tests if they have them, or their list of surrogate mothers.

I wonder if there is infighting over who can produce the best/most talented, beautiful people among different factions, or if they all work together among the different types of celebrities.

Anonymous ID:5cURaNuh Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:56:01 No.107261320 Report

Quoted By: >>107261650

>>107260726

keep going doing gods work anon,

Anonymous ID:PrzQpM1t Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:56:18 No.107261353 Report
>>107255602

learn to spell you fucking retard

View SameGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace guitarlamp.jpg, 32KiB, 564x564

Anonymous ID:qXhYTkZS Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:56:48 No.107261407 Report
>>107261158

>Why are you not researching already?

because all shit you post is not better than my lamps, not worth researching at all
go hang yourself you triple nigger

> Cali past about Children.

it is passed not past, learn some grammar, for fucks sake this is embarrassing

Anonymous ID:i91kLYMR Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:56:52 No.107261419 Report

Quoted By: >>107261650

>>107259745

You're subtly changing the way you have come to these conclusions. First, it was "research and observe", which implies not having direct access to fact. You have inferred something without verifying it. When I point this out you then changed your story to having good "information and sources", which implies a more direct confirmation. You changed up your method of "information" gathering to fill the hole my first critique put in it and then contradicted it in the process. Because you're full of shit. This entire thing is a lie. You say whatever needs to be said so you can appear legitimate. You have no research. You're a delusional faggot, or troll, or both. And what is terrifying is that there are people that eat your bullshit up.

This whole thing is an exercise in narcissism. You want to be the "cool insider with information". You want to be Agent Fox Mulder. What you actually are is a neckbearded, lying faggot that gets his rocks off by making bullshit up and painting it with a thin veneer of authority and legitimacy that only the dumbest on this website believe. You're a bottom feeder feeding the bottom feeders.

Anonymous5 !!9O2tecpDHQ6 ID:uLKrcwL4 Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:57:12 No.107261454 Report

Quoted By: >>107261887 >>107262466

>>107260884

Sigh.....

"Flat earth" & "Hollow earth" are distractions.

>>107260904

1) Re-watch the movie a few times.

2) Younger generations vs older generations, then factor in tech.

>>107260967

HLL doesn't get shilled as hard because hes playing a role as a distraction.

I get shilled hard because my information is solid.

Anonymous5 !!9O2tecpDHQ6 ID:uLKrcwL4 Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:57:30 No.107261494 Report

Quoted By: >>107263004

PAST THREADS TO DIG INTO:

<http://archive.4plebs.org/pol/search/subject/knowledge%20bomb/username/anonymous5/tripcode/%21%219O2tecpDHQ6/>

Anonymous ID:eKWovUik Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:57:45 No.107261517 Report

Quoted By: >>107261823 >>107261887

>>107260967

You're seriously retarded

>>107260960

Kanye West is a word salad egocentric retard that fried his mind from years of drug abuse stemming from the loss of his mother. Jay Z kept his distance from Kanye due to the fact that he was a bothersome chore to deal with. There's no conspiracy whatsoever.

>>107260884

Kys

>>107260734

Lampposting is bestposting

>>107260726

Kys too faggot

View SameOCRGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace zen.jpg, 154KiB, 960x552

Anonymous ID:M1PnzUI8 Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:58:05 No.107261556 Report

Quoted By: >>107261833

>>107261158

>Yep & now look at the recent Law that Cali past about Children.

Wow, I hadn't thought about that. I WANT OFF THIS RIDE AAARRRRRGHHH!!!!

View SameGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace houseoflight.jpg, 4KiB, 225x225

Anonymous ID:qXhYTkZS Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:58:05 No.107261558 Report

Where are Bogdanoff posters when you need them?

This shit is same tier, along with flat earth, agartha, and holocaust

Anonymous ID:RkOT8L9z Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:58:20 No.107261586 Report

Quoted By: >>107261833

>>107257693

madonna

Anonymous ID:jl8ond1p Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:58:28 No.107261605 Report

Quoted By: >>107261833 >>107262164

How much of sports is a Truman show? I'm sure it's less because you actually need

world class talent to reach that level.

Given Lebron James shilling for Hillary and all the media obsessions with him in high school and onwards, it is awfully suspicious. Is he part of the Truman show too? He certainly would have been a great pick genetically given his sheersize/strength etc.

Anonymous ID:Ta/yquyT Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:58:29 No.107261609 Report

>>107255602

Yep, and I don't have a problem with any of it. Do you?

Anonymous5 !!9O2tecpDHQ6 ID:uLKrcwL4 Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:58:49 No.107261650 Report

>>107261419

Your shilling is terrible.

>>107261320

I'll do what I can to keep getting information out.

>>107261193

Bingo.

View SameOCRGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace the devil you know.jpg, 66KiB, 824x596

Anonymous ID:WcsMdBmg Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:58:56 No.107261670 Report

Quoted By: >>107262509 >>107263101 >>107263430

You still havent said anything about the NRO.

The latin is "Better the devil you know"

Anonymous ID:uWQ7gUDa Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:59:06 No.107261693 Report

Quoted By: >>107262509 >>107263430

When i was kid i used to have what they call "truman delusion", feeling like i was being watched the same way i watched the programs on tv....

Are these celebrities aware of it? have they got any way of escaping? i think you said one time that Kanye was breaking the conditioning.

And what about the music industry? are there famous people that are not part of "the truman show"?

And why would they make a movie about it? wouldn't they want to keep everyone clueless about it?

View SameOCRGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace hoorah.jpg, 674KiB, 1600x1600

[The image is a cover for a music album titled "Jaws: The Revenge." The cover art features a large, stylized shark's mouth with sharp teeth, set against a blue ocean background. The shark's mouth is open wide, revealing its sharp teeth, and it appears to be roaring or breathing. The shark's eyes are visible, and its mouth is slightly tilted to the left. The background is a deep blue, with white waves breaking on the surface, suggesting a stormy sea. At the top of the image, in large, bold red letters, the word "JAWS" is prominently displayed. Below this, in smaller white letters, the title "THE REVENGE" is written. The text is arranged in a way that draws attention to the title, which is larger and more prominent than the word "JAWS." At the bottom of the image, there is additional text that reads "ORIGINAL MOTION PICTURE SOUNDTRACK" in

smaller white letters. Below this, in a smaller font, the text "Music Composed and Conducted by" is written, followed by the name "MICHAEL SMALL." The text is aligned to the left of the title. The overall style of the image is dramatic and eye-catching, with a strong emphasis on the shark and the ocean, which are central to the theme of the album. The use of bold colors and the stylized imagery create a sense of excitement and anticipation for the music contained within the album.]

Anonymous ID:TDOF2v7E Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:59:12 No.107261706 Report

Quoted By: >>107262126

>>107255602

No one really wants to go down this route. But one way or another a higher power is going to drag us there.

Thoth has the task of reuniting Tefnut and Shu, the Pizza and the Autists.

We must look at the pizza, for beyond is the eye of Horus....Soros.

We're living the Egyptian creation cosmology as we speak. Their prophets must have gotten the 2010's visions.

All of it is coming full circle.

View SameGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace Disney.jpg, 151KiB, 650x584

[The image is a stylized illustration featuring a silhouette of Mickey Mouse against a plain, light-colored background. The silhouette of Mickey Mouse is dark, with a large, dripping head and a smaller, more detailed head. The dripping head has a sinister expression and is holding a large, dripping hand. The hand is extended towards the viewer, with fingers spread wide. The background is a light beige color, providing a stark contrast to the dark silhouette. The image has a sepia tone, giving it a vintage or nostalgic feel. There are no texts or other discernible objects in the image. The style of the image is reminiscent of classic Disney animation, with a focus on the character's iconic features and the dramatic shadow effect.]

Anonymous ID:vM5faN6Y Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:59:21 No.107261727 Report

Quoted By: >>107262509 >>107262752 >>107263167 >>107263430

>>107260726

>Start looking into Hollywood & Disney.

FYI for people, Disney is one of the few old elite bloodlines. I wonder if the stars that are "discovered" to work for Disney are actually part of that bloodline.....

https://archive.org/stream/SatanicIlluminatiBloodlines/SatanicIlluminatiBloodlines_djvu.txt

Anonymous ID:iYoLn7Z3 Sun 15 Jan 2017 20:59:59 No.107261799 Report

Quoted By: >>107262509 >>107263430

Hello Anon5, thank you for sacrifice, I respect it a lot.

Do you happen to have any info related to Denmark?

View SameGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace magicalfishlamp.jpg, 51KiB, 800x548

Anonymous ID:qXhYTkZS Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:00:10 No.107261823 Report

Quoted By: >>107262317

>>107261517

>Lampposting is bestposting

post some, it is not like this thread contains any quality information except that the OP is a namefaggot

Is this lamp connected to the fact that Russians are training gigantic squids to attack USA subs and that Red Alert game series was in fact recording of alternate reality that may happen if we get enough repeating numerals?

Anonymous5 !!9O2tecpDHQ6 ID:uLKrcwL4 Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:00:14 No.107261833 Report

Quoted By: >>107263552

>>107261586

Yep, she is one of them.

>>107261556

Exactly.

>>107261605

1) Less, but they also get involved in the Breeding/swinger clubs sometimes.

2) Yep, part of the Truman Show.

View SameGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace vlcsnap-2017-01-11-02h00m23s179.jpg, 259KiB, 1280x720

Anonymous ID:zOrwBWiC Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:00:15 No.107261836 Report

Quoted By: >>107262509 >>107262893 >>107263430

>>107255602

>The Truman Show film(which everyone should watch) revealed the truth to the public about the artificial lives Celebs live

>implying earth is not one giant truman show

The space program is totally bogus. They are lying to us about space, and spending a lot of time and effort doing so.

Anonymous ID:PQq9yJsm Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:00:37 No.107261887 Report

Quoted By: >>107262028 >>107262509 >>107263430

>>107261454

Right. I meant the same thing you said, just tried to put it more subtly, but no use now since you laid it out very plainly. And anyone with a brain can read both threads and see for themselves.

>>107261517

Thanks for proving my point.

Anonymous5 !!9O2tecpDHQ6 ID:uLKrcwL4 Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:00:42 No.107261902 Report

Quoted By: >>107262138 >>107262364

The Shills are really scared & are attacking this thread in groups.

Hilarious.

Anonymous ID:JZDIXhsV Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:01:03 No.107261951 Report

Quoted By: >>107262897

>>107259362

>you need to read the Jewish conspiracy thread

Are you suggesting, that Hollywood isn't run by Jews, that they are only one ant in the colony of Hollywood executives? This is verifiably incorrect.

Anonymous ID:9iQ7WfEw Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:01:08 No.107261967 Report

Quoted By: >>107262897

>>107255602

>more darker

View SameGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace moarlamps.jpg, 13KiB, 236x314

Anonymous ID:qXhYTkZS Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:01:39 No.107262028 Report

>>107261887

>And anyone with a brain can read both threads

such waste of time would be unacceptable for any person with a brain

Anonymous ID:I5XBqg56 Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:01:41 No.107262030 Report

Quoted By: >>107262897

>>107255602

>Chris Farley

>Kevin James

>Keith Richards

>The Beluci brothers

Explain your gene preservation theory?

I believe in pedowood but this is a little /x/-ey to me.

Anonymous ID:jl8ond1p Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:01:46 No.107262045 Report

Quoted By: >>107262351

>>107261158

Wow so trump has been at this for a long time then. Was this all part of a decades long plan by trump to take them down? That would be epic.

View SameOCRGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace jaws_of_hoth____jaws____star_wars (...).jpg, 442KiB, 1600x1792

[The image is a digital artwork that combines two distinct scenes. In the upper half, there is a person riding a camel, which is positioned in the center of the image. The person is wearing a helmet and appears to be in motion, as suggested by the camel's posture. The camel is facing towards the right side of the image. In the lower half, there is a large, menacing shark with its mouth agape, appearing to be in the foreground. The shark's teeth are prominently displayed, and its eyes are focused on the person on the camel. The background of the lower half shows a frozen landscape with ice formations

and a distant structure that resembles a city or settlement. The sky is clear with a few clouds, and the overall color palette is dominated by shades of blue and white. The artwork is framed by a black border, and there is a watermark text at the bottom that reads "©2015-2016 The Art of the Steampunk". The style of the image is reminiscent of a steampunk or fantasy genre, with a blend of elements from both the real world and fantastical settings.]

Anonymous ID:TDOF2v7E Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:02:28 No.107262126 Report

>>107261706

The fact my ID is TDOF2 v7 has no correlation with Thoth or previous cycles of time.

Or the Jaws of Hoth.

View SameGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace spooky.jpg, 37KiB, 690x500

Anonymous ID:qXhYTkZS Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:02:36 No.107262138 Report

>>107261902

yes, it is scary as fuck that faggots like you breathe the same air as other living organisms on this planet

it is spooky as fuck, as this lamp!

Anonymous ID:QnYLNFBU Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:02:51 No.107262164 Report

>>107261605

Or gee could it just be the guy is talented and like jordan they can sell his name and image because he can shoot a basketball.

Anonymous ID:QumGYMcp Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:02:52 No.107262166 Report

Quoted By: >>107262314 >>107262590 >>107262836

>>107259460

You nigger are making statements without proving your point. Anon5 has at least reputation here.

View SameGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace simple.jpg, 22KiB, 500x500

Anonymous ID:qXhYTkZS Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:04:04 No.107262314 Report

>>107262166

>Anon5 has at least reputation here

reputation of being a faggot

namefags are all cancer, that is the rule

it is as simple as this lamp

View SameGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace 1483758563173.webm, 2MiB, 640x800

Anonymous ID:ekWovUik Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:04:04 No.107262317 Report

>>107261823

What's fucking sad is that there are a lot of fucking idiots that buy into this shitposters crap. And then they leave these threads and shit and slide every other genuine or authentic thread with their blatant schizoposting.

I don't have any lamps, nor genies or djinns for that matter but here's a nice ass for you're troubles

View SameGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace 1475507477248.jpg, 87KiB, 518x636

Anonymous ID:PQq9yJsm Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:04:20 No.107262351 Report

>>107262045

They don't call him the God Emperor, Time-travelling Tesla benefactor, 4D Chess

Grandmaster for nothing anon. That said, it's best not to expect the impossible from him, and just have a little faith...

View SameOCRGoo*gle*iqdbSauceNAOT*Trace* womantogo.jpg, 36KiB, 500x333

Anonymous ID:M1PnzUI8 Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:04:25 No.107262364 Report

>>107261902

They'll just end up suffering from more cognitive dissonance and PTSD. Many will go on to commit suicide or become homeless drifters. Inevitably they are all going to Hell. God damn them all.

Anonymous ID:81Sj635x Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:05:16 No.107262466 Report

Quoted By: >>107262897

>>107261454

Not to distract too much from the main point, but here is one subject I can't imagine you would be compelled to silence over -

Is hollow earth really a distraction?? toroidal structures in nature at all scales support the idea, magnetic fields take this shape.

"Can you produce proof that any explorer reached the so-called North or South Pole ?

"If there is no such thing as 83 to 90 degrees latitude ON the Earth, then how can one reach or fly over the North Pole?

"If the Earth is not hollow, then why does the north wind in the Arctic get warmer as one sails north beyond 70 degrees latitude?

"Why are there warm northerly winds and an open sea for hundreds of miles north of 82 degrees latitude ?

"After 82 degrees latitude is reached, why is the needle of a compass always agitated, restless and balky?

"If the Earth is not hollow, then why do the warm northerly winds mentioned above carry more dust than any wind on earth?

"If no rivers are flowing from the inside to the outside, then why are all ice-bergs composed of fresh water?

"Why does one find tropical seeds, plants and trees floating in the fresh water of these icebergs?

"If not all the fresh water icebergs positively do not come from any place ON earth, as would be impossible unless we assume the existence of rivers flowing from the inside to the outside, then where do they come from?

"If the inside of the Earth is not warm, why do millions of tropical birds and animals go further north in the winter time?

"Why does the wind from the north carry more pollen and blossoms than any wind on the exterior?"

"If it is not hollow and warm inside the Earth, then why does colored pollen color the snow for thousands of square miles?"

"Could it be that pollen from millions of acres and colored flowers causes the snow to be red, pink, yellow, blue, etc.?"

Then you have THIS VIDEO - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JeMzOhoJpfw>

my concern is also primarily about the OP. but i dont get this chance often

Anonymous ID:abnG7mi3 Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:05:18 No.107262473 Report

>>107255834

whats the story on this pic

Anonymous5 !!9O2tecpDHQ6 ID:uLKrcwL4 Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:05:32 No.107262509

Report

Quoted By: >>107262814

>>107261670

Because, I would have to ask around abit.

>>107261693

1) Yes & No. All depends on the handlers & life.

2) They can break out, but its rare sometimes. Also Kanye came from the outside.

3) The Music industry is involved & very rarely people come from the outside.

4) To drop the public hints & also laugh at how in a trance the public is due to it.

>>107261727

Hollywood is a interesting place.

>>107261799

Other then I hope Europe starts looking into the EU Army, not much.

>>107261836

Not really.

>>107261887

Exactly.

Look at how hard this thread is getting shilled.

If I was "just a larper", you wouldn't see this much effort & coordinated effort in attacking me.

Anonymous ID:ekWovUik Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:06:16 No.107262590 Report

Quoted By: >>107267464

>>107262166

From the way you type Hanz I imagine you being a nassally high pitched bore of human being that needs to spice his mundane life by believing the snake oil of a schizophrenic

Anonymous ID:pWcP239i Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:07:17 No.107262728 Report

Quoted By: >>107263122

>>107255602

Knowledgeable bro! Tell me is it reasonable to assume indo pak tensions suddenly dropped after trump won is because (((their))) plan got disrupted?

Anonymous ID:YPdXv2A2 Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:07:25 No.107262752 Report

Quoted By: >>107263024 >>107263167

>>107261727

Im pretty positive Kurt Russel is one of Walt's kids. His last words were the "kurt russel" odd.

View SameGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace stackedlamp.jpg, 33KiB, 620x531

Anonymous ID:qXhYTkZS Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:07:52 No.107262814 Report

>>107262509

Was this lamp abused in childhood by other lamps and torches?
are lightbulbs sinister?

>If I was "just a larper", you wouldn't see this much effort & coordinated effort in attacking me.

>being oppressed for being a faggot is proof that I am not a faggot

Are you product of some unholy union of Canadian and Strayan, with burger education?
post your dick

Anonymous ID:n/3NU5d0 Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:08:00 No.107262836 Report

Quoted By: >>107262939 >>107263122

>>107262166

Second this. To the Poland shill and the obvious other shills: If you don't agree with a thread then leave. That's what people do. The fact that you're obviously trying your absolute hardest to derail the thread, over and over and over defeats your purpose of shilling by exposing yourself as a shill. Fuck off and try again next time

Anonymous ID:YPdXv2A2 Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:08:28 No.107262893 Report

>>107261836

This.

/bread.

Anonymous5 !!9O2tecpDHQ6 ID:uLKrcwL4 Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:08:30 No.107262897 Report

Quoted By: >>107263495 >>107267158

>>107261951

Read the thread & wake the fuck up butter cup.

>>107261967

It is actually if you consider the implications.

It's a business/industry with production lines pretty much.

>>107262030

Explains a few things.

>>107262466

Ever notice how a a popular earth shape theory happens every couple of years?

And no one is questioning where they are coming from?

View SameGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace wat.jpg, 7KiB, 225x225

Anonymous ID:qXhYTkZS Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:08:48 No.107262939 Report

Quoted By: >>107263623 >>107263646

>>107262836

fuck you and fuck your mother, I will post lamps to illuminate the fuck out your dark brain

Anonymous ID:4eJtpVuc Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:09:20 No.107263004 Report

>>107261494

I believe you and I think you're right.

Anonymous ID:IP8LQvbE Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:09:27 No.107263024 Report

Quoted By: >>107264091

>>107262752

I'm not sure, Walt was redpilled af. He would probably set Disney on fire if he was alive today and saw the shit it was doing. He was well aware of Commie infiltration of Hollywood back in the day.

Anonymous ID:VYG2jcVK Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:09:47 No.107263069 Report

Quoted By: >>107263417

>>107255602

>more darker

stopped reading there

Anonymous ID:xEu2OmqY Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:10:04 No.107263101 Report

Quoted By: >>107263172 >>107263417 >>107263634

>>107261670

Earth is Flat. I dont give a shit about celebrities. Why are we caring about celebrities on /pol/??? Flat Earth is not a psyop, they have literally lied to you about the sun, the moon, the bloody "universe" and the earth and theyve programmed you from birth to accept it. Im a pilot for heavens sake, i dont have to change the elevator of the plane to account for any damn curvature, and gravity or any other shill bs explanation cannot answer to that. then there are gyro's.. there are ridiculous distances seen, etc etc, etc.

Look into Flat Earth, i beg of you. Look with an open mind and realise it is the most heavily shilled topic on the web.

Anonymous5 !!9O2tecpDHQ6 ID:uLKrcwL4 Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:10:14 No.107263122 Report

Quoted By: >>107263342

>>107262728

Yes, but remember soros Black Op's/PMC are still active in various places around the Globe.

Like Syria,Ukraine & that border situation.

>>107262836

The Shills are really going hard on this topic in particular if you noticed.

Anonymous ID:PQq9yJsm Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:10:36 No.107263167 Report

Quoted By: >>107264091 >>107268540

>>107261727

>>107262752

Isn't Walt one of the "good guys" per se, or at the very least, against the shit the Hollywood elite are pulling? I mean, at the very least, he'd probably be a little disappointed if he saw what his company has now become, and how they've managed to subvert it so heavily...

View SameGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace dedicatedtoanon5.jpg, 354KiB, 1600x1600

Anonymous ID:qXhYTkZS Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:10:38 No.107263172 Report

>>107263101

earth is a lamp

Anonymous ID:JZDIXhsV Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:10:42 No.107263182 Report

Quoted By: >>107263543

>>107260726

A5 you are paranoid about everyone being part of the shill army. I want to believe you but you're not making it easy.

You are on a board where we think the Jew is at the center of everything, and you came on here and say they are one group of many, don't give any evidence or examples, and call everyone who disagrees with you a shill. What did you think would happen?

What age group do you fall in, A5? Disclosing this would not dox you.

Anonymous ID:XTo7WTui Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:10:45 No.107263188 Report

Quoted By: >>107263806 >>107263956

1)With this Truman/Hollywood breeding program going on, why was the movie Truman Show even allowed to be made? I mean, even if it's subtle, it gives away Hollywoods celeb breeding/controlling program, why the hell would the globalsits allow it to be made?

2)Also, Peter Weir (who directed the movie) anything on him? And why isn't he dead, i mean, if i was a globalist, i would kill the guy if he puts symbolism/subtly gave away info

about my secret breeding&surveillance program about celebrities... unless they were fine with ihm releasing it?

Hell, you did say they killed Stanley Kubrik for his Eyes Wide Shut(pedo sex parties) and Giger for his art(human experiments)

3)What's the deal with the wall? Will Mexico still pay for it? (now or later)

Anonymous ID:0H3ZMUFu Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:11:25 No.107263273 Report

Quoted By: >>107263443

>>107255602

i blame the jews for this sick and twisted reality.

Anonymous ID:1kejzuOR Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:11:50 No.107263320 Report

Quoted By: >>107263543

>>107255602

I work in Hollywood.

The amount of falsehood and autism in your post is beyond measurable.

You should look up auditioning and casting calls. We don't hire people based on mommy and daddy. We do it based on their ability to take direction and perform - to read and interpret the script and their resume (much like any other job)

View SameGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace tripodlampisproofofaliens.png, 149KiB, 460x460

Anonymous ID:qXhYTkZS Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:11:58 No.107263342 Report

>>107263122

I do it for free

Anonymous5 !!9O2tecpDHQ6 ID:uLKrcwL4 Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:12:28 No.107263417 Report

Quoted By: >>107263574 >>107263734

>>107263069

"Stop reading right there"

Doing yourself a disservice.

Also, it is "more darker" if you consider how Hollywood is a Industry/Business & these people are products of the systems that keep in running & supplied with fresh stock.

>>107263101

Flat earth, just like Hollow Earth is another one of those Earth Shape theories that gets created every couple of years.

Anonymous ID:eKWovUik Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:12:35 No.107263430 Report

>>107261670 #

>Because, I would have to ask around abit.

Because you don't know anything with what youre discussing

>>107261693 #

>1) Yes & No. All depends on the handlers & life.

More schizoposting

>2) They can break out, but its rare sometimes. Also Kanye came from the outside.

There's no mkultra programming going on

>3) The Music industry is involved & very rarely people come from the outside.

A majority of the people in the music industry come from the outside and work there way up actually

>4) To drop the public hints & also laugh at how in a trance the public is due to it.

Yeah, it's called having a life you stupid faggot

>>107261727 #

>Hollywood is a interesting place.

An*

>>107261799 #

>Other then I hope Europe starts looking into the EU Army, not much.

More baseless aspirations

>>107261836 #

Not really.

>>107261887 #

>Exactly.

>Look at how hard this thread is getting shilled.

The only person shilling here is you and you're schizoposting

>If I was "just a larper", you wouldn't see this much effort & coordinated effort in attacking me.

You are indeed a larper and everyone here attacking you is doing so because your a newfag tinfoiler that's shitting up this board brainwashing idiots already susceptible to it.

View SameGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace classy.jpg, 14KiB, 300x300

Anonymous ID:qXhYTkZS Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:12:44 No.107263443 Report

>>107263273

you should blame lamps

their agenda is sinister

Anonymous ID:PbP548TB Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:12:54 No.107263466 Report

>>107255602

I really hate this picture.

View SameOCRGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace 1484334283714.jpg, 13KiB, 480x360

Anonymous ID:81Sj635x Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:13:12 No.107263495 Report

Quoted By: >>107263806

>>107262897

yes, of course I do, which is why I want to understand the purpose. hollow earth threads, and threads like yours, often behave the same way, so from a reader's perspective like mine, they all seem to come from the same or similar groups of people with insider info. I figured a question about strict science would allow you to give me a more specific answer to an obscure topic, providing a level of validity to undecided readers, thus counteracting the trolls.

I never said nazis are in there or anything, just trying to approach it from a strictly analytical angle

Anonymous5 !!9O2tecpDHQ6 ID:uLKrcwL4 Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:13:30 No.107263543 Report

Quoted By: >>107263723 >>107264025

>>107263320

>>107263182

Fascinating how many different shill scripts/angles are being deployed in this thread in hopes to discredit the information & the person bringing it out.

Anonymous ID:jl8ond1p Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:13:35 No.107263552 Report

Quoted By: >>107264143

>>107261833

1) Is lebron into the swinger/pedo stuff too?

2) How is they controlling him? Does he know he's in the Truman show?

3) plz tell me steph curry is not part of the system. He is so skilled and fun to watch, is religious and has such a nice family.

4) Other sports figures we should look into?

View SameGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace isthislamppixarmade.jpg, 38KiB, 620x620

Anonymous ID:qXhYTkZS Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:13:46 No.107263574 Report

>>107263417

>Doing yourself a disservice

>waaah pay attention to my bullshit or you are bad hrnggggg

Anonymous ID:n/3NU5d0 Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:14:13 No.107263623 Report

Quoted By: >>107263901

>>107262939

Don't be such a silly goose. You must get tired after shilling so hard. I hope you find peace one day. And I hope you find love

Anonymous ID:M1PnzUI8 Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:14:20 No.107263634 Report

Quoted By: >>107263879 >>107267566

>>107263101

If we flat earth then it is an artificial world we live in. If you are correct then you prove OP's point.

View SameOCRGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace kve.png, 2MiB, 753x1054

[The image is a black and white illustration that appears to be a page from a book or a document, possibly a book of magic or alchemy, given the presence of symbols and text that are commonly associated with such texts. The central focus of the image is a large, ornate, circular diagram with a spiral pattern, which is surrounded by various other symbols and text. At the top of the circular diagram, there is a depiction of a sun with rays emanating from it, and below it, there is a depiction of a figure holding a staff, which is often associated with the concept of the sun or the divine. To the right of the circular diagram, there is a depiction of a crescent moon, and below it, there is a depiction of a figure holding a book. The circular diagram is surrounded by a grid of numbers, which are likely to represent the days of the week or some other time-related concept. The numbers range from 1 to 27, with some numbers being larger and more prominent than others. The text surrounding the diagram is in Latin, and it appears to be a list of numbers and their corresponding days of the week, with the numbers 1 to 27 being listed in a sequence. The text is not fully legible due to the image quality and the angle at which the photo was taken. The overall style of the image is reminiscent of medieval or early modern alchemical or magical texts, with its intricate designs and symbolic representations. The use of the sun, moon, and other celestial bodies, along with the spiral pattern, is a common motif in such texts, often representing the cycles of the universe or the divine.]

Anonymous ID:TDOF2v7E Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:14:25 No.107263646 Report

Quoted By: >>107263901 >>107264289

>>107262939

The lamps play a vital role in this prophecy.

The time is upon us.

View SameGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace hallsell table lamp.jpg, 13KiB, 250x250

Anonymous ID:qXhYTkZS Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:15:07 No.107263723 Report

>>107263543

>hopes to discredit the information & the person bringing it out.

it never had any credit to begin with, you should post more lamps if you want people to take you seriously

Anonymous ID:xEu2OmQY Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:15:13 No.107263734 Report

Quoted By: >>107264143

>>107263417

ANSWER THE ARGUMENTS OR SHUT UP. FLAT EARTH IS NOT A PSY-OP, IT IS 100% VERIFIABLE TRUTH.

Anonymous ID:a4P+wls6 Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:15:21 No.107263749 Report

Quoted By: >>107264002

>>107261117

Heh. I've got something similar hanging from the ceiling in the living room.

Anonymous5 !!9O2tecpDHQ6 ID:uLKrcwL4 Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:15:45 No.107263806 Report

Quoted By: >>107264520

>>107263188

1) Because its amusing how much the public is in a trance vs how many in the public can understand things.

2) He did a good job with the movie & it helped a Actors career.

3) It's going to happen.

>>107263495

Al I'm saying is that people should be questioning where these theories are coming from & why they gain so much rapid traction.

Anonymous5 !!9O2tecpDHQ6 ID:uLKrcwL4 Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:16:04 No.107263852 Report

Quoted By: >>107264103

PAST THREADS TO DIG INTO:

<http://archive.4plebs.org/pol/search/subject/knowledge%20bomb/username/anonymous5/tripcode/%21%219O2tecpDHQ6/>

Anonymous ID:xEu2OmQY Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:16:22 No.107263879 Report

Quoted By: >>107264210

>>107263634

What we live in i do not know. I know that it is flat, but beyond that nothing would surprise me by now.

View SameGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace bomberman lamp.jpg, 384KiB, 1200x1440

Anonymous ID:qXhYTkZS Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:16:28 No.107263901 Report

Quoted By: >>107264120

>>107263623

and I hope you find lamp

nah, stay in the darkness faggot, moloch 4ever, praise anon5

>>107263646

how this numerals are connected to lamps?

Anonymous ID:PQq9yJsm Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:16:54 No.107263956 Report

Quoted By: >>107264462

>>107263188

You forget how big the egos of these people are. These are the same people that are openly advertising what they're doing behind on closed doors on public channels like Instagram for the entire world to see.

Peter Weir is small fry compared to Kubrick and Giger. Killing him would bring a lot more unwanted attention that they would like. And Kubrick and Giger were far more "dangerous" influence wise

View SameGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace leg lamp.jpg, 195KiB, 1000x1481

Anonymous ID:qXhYTkZS Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:17:14 No.107264002 Report

>>107263749

sweet, where did you bough it?

Anonymous ID:07jyqT/j Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:17:25 No.107264025 Report

Quoted By: >>107264428 >>107264482

>>107263543

Yeah that's what really clued me in to the reality of these threads. Why would anyone waste their time attacking a random person on an imageboard? If the information is bullshit the thread will die and no one will pay attention to it.

Obviously there's more to it since what you're saying subconsciously resonates with a lot of people.

Anonymous ID:yafv13hv Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:17:29 No.107264036 Report

Quoted By: >>107264103 >>107264482

What do you think of Rand Paul and Ron Paul?

They seem like genuine "non-establishment" guys who mean well

View SameOCRGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace Tesla_v_Edison.jpg, 2MiB, 2700x2690

Anonymous ID:vM5faN6Y Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:18:03 No.107264091 Report

Quoted By: >>107264482

>>107260609

>>107261158

>Why did Trump love to hang around celebrities so much if he knew what was going on?

>To gather information.

Hm, so potential list of leads...

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Celebrity_Apprentice

Along with the whole pro vs anti-Trump dynamic.

>>107263024

>>107263167

So someone had co-opted the business/bloodline....

If you look at the beginnings of Hollywood, Thomas Edison had a lot to do with it starting up in CA...

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cinema_of_the_United_States

Maybe the world is now a battle of Tesla vs Edison control.

View SameGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace 46440133-ed24-42c1-8cba-2ab32f1e (...).jpg, 14KiB, 1000x1000

Anonymous ID:qXhYTkZS Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:18:12 No.107264103 Report

>>107263852

there is nothing in there about the lamps, disregarded

>>107264036

those guys are lamps

Anonymous ID:n/3NU5d0 Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:18:18 No.107264120 Report

Quoted By: >>107264288

>>107263901

Lol, do you think what you're doing is actually working? Just curious.

Anonymous ID:JZDIXhsV Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:18:24 No.107264136 Report

Quoted By: >>107264462 >>107265038

>>107260967

Common Jew tactic is to play both sides. Not saying that this is what's happening, but we should be skeptical. HLI and a5 could be a 2 pronged Psyop.

Anonymous5 !!9O2tecpDHQ6 ID:uLKrcwL4 Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:18:27 No.107264143 Report

Quoted By: >>107264833 >>107264887 >>107265054 >>107265377

>>107263552

1) "Bulls & Mares"

2) Handlers make or break it.

3) That would have to be researched into.

4) Which ones have generated alot of buzz by being anti-trump & anti-US?

>>107263734

Have you even looked into where that "Flat Earth" & "Hollow Earth" theories have came from?

I'm not taking sides, I'm just saying they both have signs that they are a distraction from something.

Bengali Apostate ID:prpddnYS Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:18:54 No.107264187 Report

Quoted By: >>107264550 >>107265038

Hi Mr. 5.

My idea is that the entire world is like a closed habitat and everything we see as "land" is dead organic matter. Every continent was at one point a giant living creature. Circle of life.

Anonymous ID:M1PnzUI8 Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:19:04 No.107264210 Report

Quoted By: >>107264454

>>107263879

It is an oblate spheroid flattened at the poles and bulging at the equator. Aslo if the water were removed earth would look really bumpy and ugly. There are probably some vast cave systems but flat earth is not true.

Anonymous ID:glykNkqS Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:19:31 No.107264281 Report

Quoted By: >>107264454 >>107265038

Did Robin Williams commit suicide or was he suicided?

View SameGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace curved.jpg, 3KiB, 248x203

Anonymous ID:qXhYTkZS Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:19:35 No.107264288 Report

Quoted By: >>107265048

>>107264120

what am I doing? I am lampposting, everybody knows it is common tactic for CTR to suppress truth from ever going out, or else the goyim will know!

View SameGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace thoth2.jpg, 18KiB, 145x250

[The image depicts an Egyptian figure, likely a pharaoh, standing in a traditional Egyptian stance. The figure is wearing a headdress with a blue and green headdress, a white and gold headdress, and a yellow and gold striped apron. The figure's face is obscured by a large, curved beak, and it is holding a small, ornate object in its left hand, which appears to be a small, round object with a cross on it. The figure's right hand is raised, holding a long, curved staff. The background of the image is plain white, emphasizing the figure and the objects it holds. The style of the image is reminiscent of ancient Egyptian art, with its use of color and detail to convey the figure's identity and the objects it holds.]

Anonymous ID:TDOF2v7E Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:19:37 No.107264289 Report

>>107263646

See. This is a hieroglyph of my previous post.

View SameOCRGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace 1407641487546.jpg, 38KiB, 640x480

Anonymous ID:V9mjVXIY Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:20:37 No.107264413 Report

Quoted By: >>107264887 >>107265038

>>107255602

An interesting theory, I could see it happen considering how the elites love to throw bones. Does this only apply to Hollywood or do other foreign medias perform this kinda breeding shit too?

Anonymous ID:eKWovUik Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:20:45 No.107264428 Report

Quoted By: >>107266567

>>107264025

The more people that tell him to stop shitposting, the more he feels compelled to shill the fact that he's this enlightened truth teller. And then other shitposters like yourself who can't formulate their own opinions take his side because he's some unsung hero that's only being persecuted by illuminati shills.

> I have to share this website with you faggots

View SameGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace drawing.png, 2KiB, 177x285

Anonymous ID:qXhYTkZS Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:20:57 No.107264454 Report

Quoted By: >>107264690

>>107264210

>It is an oblate spheroid flattened at the poles
stop your lies, nothing is flattened at us

>>107264281

he was killed by blunt force trauma
somebody attacked him

with a lamp

Anonymous ID:PQq9yJsm Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:21:02 No.107264462 Report

Quoted By: >>107264597

>>107263956

*they wouldn't like

>>107264136

I agree, but I'm more inclined to give A5 a bigger benefit of a doubt based on the past information he's brought forward, and how it's been much more accurate/verifiable than what HLI has brought forward.

Anonymous5 !!9O2tecpDHQ6 ID:uLKrcwL4 Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:21:14 No.107264482 Report

Quoted By: >>107264943

>>107264025

It's clear these shills have a vested interest in sliding & discrediting the threads I do.

And they are doing such a obvious/sloppy job lately.

If you have been watching my threads, I even have regular shills who show up.

The information I get out(regardless of the subject) is solid.

>>107264036

They seem to be good guys.

>>107264091

Fascinating isn't it?

Anonymous ID:81Sj635x Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:21:32 No.107264520 Report

>>107263806

It's a hard question to answer, as people like the ones who make those threads, or you, aren't the only ones capable of accidentally making a topic explode. I'm pretty sure I accidentally did that with Brendan Fraser.

As for the answer that I'm guessing will be the only one I'm getting, which signs do you mean?? The fact that they often get deleted so quickly, or the fact that they coincided with the 30c temperature jump and people going there for space training and to have a religious get together at the height of the election?

There are many possibilities here, asking where they come from doesn't narrow it down, as that's the one question you can guarantee most on /pol/ will have tried to answer themselves (i hope)

Anonymous ID:/ZVXEha6 Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:21:41 No.107264550 Report

Quoted By: >>107264744 >>107264875

>>107264187

Reality is an Illusion

View SameGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace official lamp of satan.jpg, 6KiB, 229x229

Anonymous ID:qXhYTkZS Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:22:00 No.107264597 Report

Quoted By: >>107268417

>>107264462

>past information he's brought forward

literally what information?

Anonymous ID:M1PnzUI8 Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:22:38 No.107264690 Report

Quoted By: >>107264831

>>107264454

I just said the earth is round you faggot.

View SameGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace mickey lamp.jpg, 446KiB, 1600x1600

Anonymous ID:qXhYTkZS Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:22:58 No.107264744 Report

Quoted By: >>107264956

>>107264550

We all live in a shadow cast by lamp, and Walt Disney knew that, this lamp is the proof of that

View SameGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace DEMIJOHN-55.5cm-table-lamp_2of2_ (...).jpg, 6KiB, 220x220

Anonymous ID:qXhYTkZS Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:23:31 No.107264831 Report

>>107264690

lies, earth is a lamp

Anonymous ID:jl8ond1p Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:23:32 No.107264833 Report

Quoted By: >>107264914

>>107264143

Greg poppyovich and the van gundy bros?

View SameGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace mr-p-one-man-shy-dkk-599.jpg, 111KiB, 665x998

Anonymous ID:TDOf2v7E Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:23:52 No.107264875 Report

Quoted By: >>107265041

>>107264550

Whose illusion?

Anonymous ID:vM5faN6Y Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:23:58 No.107264887 Report

>>107264143

>Have you even looked into where that "Flat Earth" & "Hollow Earth" theories have come from?

>I'm not taking sides, I'm just saying they both have signs that they are a distraction from something.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c5pvy27I-rQ>

>>107264413

Vivendi is one of the studios working with companies like RGBM and Def Jam

View SameGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace black.jpg, 49KiB, 1200x1200

Anonymous ID:qXhYTkZS Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:24:10 No.107264914 Report

>>107264833

all lamps

Anonymous ID:81Sj635x Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:24:30 No.107264943 Report

>>107264482

I mean, your threads have the same hallmarks of suspicion that antarctic/hollow earth threads have, only difference is that they provide some level of historical documentation and scientific analysis.

So if it's not true, who would bother making a big deal, and if it is true, who could want us to realize this ASAP?

The heavy presence of pollen in arctic tundras is puzzling to me.

Anonymous ID:eKWovUik Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:24:36 No.107264956 Report

Quoted By: >>107265270

>>107264744

It all makes sense now. Donald Duck was actually a lamp that was self inserted by Disney to exude his disdain for jews.

Bengali Apostate ID:prpddnYS Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:25:11 No.107265027 Report

Mr. 5, how old are the dinobirds? They seem to be exactly the same as terror birds, some of whom survived into the last ice age. I'm not sure I believe much 65 million or anything about geologic history. Care to shed the light? Am I on the right track? Are they also lying about continental drift?

Anonymous5 !!9O2tecpDHQ6 ID:uLKrcwL4 Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:25:15 No.107265038 Report

Quoted By: >>107267610

>>107264281

His Truman Show had its final season.

>>107264136

Read my "JC Psy-op" thread:

<http://archive.4plebs.org/pol/search/subject/knowledge%20bomb/username/anonymous5/tripcode/%21%219O2tecpDHQ6/>

Also HLI is a fraud/honeypot, actual HLI guys have seen through his BS.

>>107264187

It's interesting.

You can find fossilized remains of these Giant Creatures on every Continent. It's also one of the reasons why those Bagger Excavators were built.

>>107264413

It's no theory.

Also Hollywood primary does it.

View SameGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace rook_modern_table_lamp_2.jpg, 95KiB,

1400x1400

Anonymous ID:qXhYTkZS Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:25:16 No.107265041 Report

>>107264875

I see my truth enlightened another poster

good, now dig deeper

Anonymous ID:n/3NU5d0 Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:25:19 No.107265048 Report

Quoted By: >>107265479

>>107264288

No one said CTR or the other horseshit you vomited. What do you look like? Light, dark, boy, girl, hair color, scars? I'm genuinely curious.

Anonymous ID:jl8ond1p Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:25:22 No.107265054 Report

Quoted By: >>107265872

>>107264143

Also I'd imagine NBA is the biggest Truman show league, given how much SJW bs they pull. Poor Don Sterling never stood a chance.

View SameGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace Question Kek 2.png, 54KiB, 229x216

Anonymous ID:QEncC5wf Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:25:29 No.107265071 Report

Quoted By: >>107265872

What in the fuck is going on with Mike Enoch, TRS, Goons, 8/pol/, and here? Is TRS controlled opposition/infiltrated? It sure looks like it.

This E-drama shit feels like someone trying to pull the same tactics that took down GamerGate on /pol/.

View SameGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace oh_nice.webm, 539KiB, 640x360

Anonymous ID:pVFATdzD Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:25:43 No.107265103 Report

Quoted By: >>107265872

>most celebrities look alike

You figured out that white celebrities are the standard for physical beauty and what's in

out of odds celebrities will have similar features since that's what makes them appealing.

You cracked this case wide open.

Bravo, anon

Anonymous ID:81Sj635x Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:25:43 No.107265105 Report

don't get me wrong, I'm not trying to discredit you, but these threads die fast so I might as well wait for that before diving into the archives

Anonymous ID:XTo7WTui Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:25:54 No.107265121 Report

Quoted By: >>107265872

1)Any chances of you doing a thread about Hitler/Holocaust/nazis fully? I mean the next one or in the future if you have the full info?

You did say that SS and arabs betrayed Hitler and had a few death camps. Arabs knowing ways to mass murder jews and other things like nazi-arab connections which were true, just by wikipedia..

2)Honestly, i hope the documents containing info about these things exist and go public someday. Any chance they could? Like the world knowing that Hitler wuz a good boy?

Hell, they could change history, besides mass bankruptcy of ww2/holocaust historians. Would like to hear more about this besides what you said, if possible.

Anonymous ID:pi12avYz Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:26:11 No.107265160 Report

Quoted By: >>107265872

>>107255602

That movie is actually about God. I mean they make it rather fucking obvious. CHRISTopher and MOSES, for heaven's sake.

TRUMAN = TRUE MAN = HUMAN.

It's your typical atheistic faggotry and nothing more. It's actually positively Satanic and literally Luciferean because God is the bad guy and the devil is man's savior (Promethean).

In the old myths and religions - every single one without fail ended up casting God/The Creator as a villain; otherwise, they often largely agreed in the main with the biblical view of human history.

View SameGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace 1430252671730.jpg, 29KiB, 600x579

[The image is a candid photograph of a person in a room with other individuals. The individual in the foreground is wearing a blue sweater and has a ponytail with a gold headband. They are gesturing with their hands, possibly in a gesture of explanation or disagreement. The background shows a room with a television set and other people, suggesting a social or communal setting. The lighting in the room is soft, and the focus is on the person in the foreground. There are no discernible texts or logos in the image. The style of the image is informal and appears to be taken in a candid moment.]

Anonymous ID:vgLAOHHS Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:26:38 No.107265209 Report

Quoted By: >>107265872

>still no tranny switch footage

View SameGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace happie-apple-lamp-1.jpg, 13KiB, 410x410

Anonymous ID:qXhYTkZS Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:27:06 No.107265270 Report

Quoted By: >>107265407

>>107264956

you forgot about ayy Imaos and time travel

pic related is what Eve turned on to enlighten Garden of Eden, and she could see how cool it was, but it made God awake cause he could only get some sleep in the darkness, and now here we are

check it, truth is out there! I swear!

Anonymous ID:jl8ond1p Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:27:54 No.107265367 Report

Quoted By: >>107265585 >>107265872

So trump has been planning this takedown for decades?

Anonymous ID:HKIJ9eqR Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:27:57 No.107265374 Report

That's bs bro I literally know 2 people that became famous, and both of them were either broke as shit or completely unknown to anyone other than people in their towns, and now they're famous. I even know a lot of pro athletes now who back in the day wouldn't have even been noticed

Anonymous ID:xEu2OmQY Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:27:58 No.107265377 Report

Quoted By: >>107265749 >>107265872

>>107264143

Your FEELINGS doesn't matter. This is the most heavily shilled topic online. They have physicists working for them for christs sakes, lying their ass off. Anything to "prove" the earth is a ball.

If you put in the time and effort and learns to think you will see that the earth cannot be round -- it's an impossibility.

View SameOCRGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace 1484462447888.jpg, 11KiB, 261x168

Anonymous ID:81Sj635x Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:28:13 No.107265407 Report

Quoted By: >>107265590

>>107265270

you're fired!!

Anonymous ID:yeFIB3vr Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:28:16 No.107265415 Report

Quoted By: >>107265716 >>107265872

>>107255602

So what about celebs like Mel Gibson or Clint Eastwood? Their 'show' has not been ended despite them not towing the line. Kanye is another good example, but then again it's easy to pass him off as crazy.

View SameGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace tall lamp.jpg, 17KiB, 488x1360

Anonymous ID:qXhYTkZS Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:28:51 No.107265479 Report

Quoted By: >>107265904

>>107265048

>What do you look like

like that

pic related is me few days before my wedding with beautiful kitchen lamp, she is preggos now, and she will give birth to our kids

I hope they won't become shitty LED lights

Anonymous ID:e6/Pln6r Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:29:40 No.107265562 Report

Quoted By: >>107265691

ugh so lebron is a bull for breeders? He has a horse face, that is a hell of a gamble for parents. 1% chance to get to NBA, 100% of being ugly

Anonymous ID:tdBSKBcw Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:29:50 No.107265585 Report

>>107265367

Yes

View SameGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace cairo tiffany style.jpg, 333KiB, 1047x1500

Anonymous ID:qXhYTkZS Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:29:55 No.107265590 Report

>>107265407

you can't fire me, I must spread the light!

you are shill!!!!1111

View SameGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace signature-design-by-ashley-danie (...).jpg,

543KiB, 1653x2712

Anonymous ID:qXhYTkZS Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:30:46 No.107265691 Report

Quoted By: >>107269557

>>107265562

cause he failed at being lamp

Anonymous ID:Ar/yULm Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:30:54 No.107265704 Report

Quoted By: >>107265830 >>107266000

Sorry for offtopic, but will this spark WWII?

US troops in Poland and Russia responding by moving more missiles to Kalinigrad.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-russia-poland-idUSKBN14W1E4>

Anonymous ID:pi12avYz Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:31:00 No.107265716 Report

Quoted By: >>107265948 >>107266237

>>107265415

Interestingly all 3 of them have done Christological themes (Kanye, Jesus Walks; Clint Eastwood, Gran Torino. Mel Gibson's Apocalypto is deeply fucking red pilld if you watch it thoughtfully).

View SameOCRGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace 913l8Lg7Z2L.jpg, 522KiB, 1761x2232

[The image is a colorful illustration featuring four anthropomorphic characters. The central figure is a yellow dog-like character with a large, open mouth and a wide smile. To the left of the dog, there is a blue character with a surprised expression, wearing sunglasses and a baseball cap. To the right of the dog, there is a green frog-like character with a wide grin. In front of the frog, there is a yellow character with a red tongue, wearing a white shirt and a baseball cap. The background is a solid green color with the text "BOYS CLUB 4" in white letters at the top. The style of the image is cartoonish and expressive, with a playful and exaggerated depiction of the characters.]

Anonymous ID:81Sj635x Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:31:10 No.107265749 Report

Quoted By: >>107268994

>>107265377

well, address my points above, how do you factor toroidal flow into a flat earth???
toroidal structures are provable, observable, and exist in nature very commonly at all scales.

density of matter, spin, and the source of emergence of toroid structures would need to be addressed for a flat earth still. seems unlikely, but tell me what I'm missing.

Anonymous ID:846l9E3l Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:31:12 No.107265751 Report

Quoted By: >>107266000

Anon5... do you actually get off on larping? I mean do you physically ejaculate at some point while doing these threads?

View SameGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace nice forest lamp.jpg, 492KiB, 1668x2746

Anonymous ID:qXhYTkZS Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:31:48 No.107265830 Report

>>107265704

no, Russia and Poland are both only interested in lamps

Anonymous5 !!9O2tecpDHQ6 ID:uLKrcwL4 Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:32:08 No.107265872 Report

Quoted By: >>107268057

>>107265054

Sports are a big Business/Industry.

>>107265071

What's going in there is basically Syria.

Multiple different groups fighting for control.

>>107265103

If thats what you got out of it, that you have so much to learn.

>>107265121

1) I'll do a thread about it.

2) If people look for them.

>>107265160

Wrong.

>>107265209

Major porn places do it.

>>107265367

Don't forget other Globalist groups.

>>107265377

I just said I'm not taking sides.

Just pointing out you should also be investigating where those theories are coming out of & how they get circulating so fast.

>>107265415

Coming from the outside allows you to break out easier.

Anonymous ID:n/3NU5d0 Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:32:23 No.107265904 Report

Quoted By: >>107266108

>>107265479

Is this an accurate representation? Are you light skinned, tall and thin with a large head and flat long feet? Are you at home? Do you live with family or any roommates?

View SameGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace midcentury.jpg, 5KiB, 233x233

Anonymous ID:qXhYTkZS Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:32:46 No.107265948 Report
>>107265716

interestingly enough this lamp is made out of walnut

Anonymous ID:dzRO+yNy Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:32:58 No.107265976 Report
Quoted By: >>107266097

keisha appeared on an episode on jessica simpson sisters reality show on mtv a few years before she became the music artist.....

is this what your talking about?

View SameOCRGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace 1484459815130-pol.jpg, 254KiB, 580x891

Anonymous ID:gxaH6nKP Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:33:04 No.107265995 Report
Quoted By: >>107266387

>>107260884

Spacetime is curved around the Earth's mass. Atoms are just electrically charged bits of information, they curve along with the background pattern.

I was an engineer on a waste water tunneling job. The surveyor worked on CERN in cali. He got into an arguement with city surveyors who used a curved grid instead of a flat grid, saying we were off by feet coming into the shaft. We were 0.04" off, basically perfect. Why? Why did a flat grid work on a curved Earth? Because the fucking laser and EVERYTHING curves along with the Earth, because gravity is actually strong electrical charges that bend the AETHER from super massive objects like planets.

Kys.

Anonymous5 !!9O2tecpDHQ6 ID:uLKrcwL4 Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:33:06 No.107266000 Report

Quoted By: >>107266387 >>107267040
>>107265704

Don't think so.

Looks like posturing.

>>107265751

You shills are so pathetic.

View SameOCRGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace 1984.4.jpg, 60KiB, 500x340

Anonymous ID:oDiBq6H1 Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:33:35 No.107266062 Report
Quoted By: >>107266217 >>107266625 >>107266786

>>107255602

I love this post. Thank you anon.

Hollywood

From: holly wood

Meaning: Magicians would make their magic wands out of holly wood. These wands would then be used to cast spells on people.

Government

From: govern(control) ment(mind)

Meaning: It simply means to control the mind. The most important thing for a government to do is to control the mind of the populace. Control of the body only comes secondary.

Entertainment

From: Enter(to enter) Tain(to hold) Ment(mind)

Meaning: It means to enter a persons mind and to get a hold upon it as to keep it restrained.

God bless

View SameOCRGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace 1472441920827.jpg, 129KiB, 580x788

Anonymous ID: gno8ZDT6 Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:33:48 No.107266091 Report

Quoted By: >>107266297

Was The Truman Show a metaphor for becoming redpilled about the fact that Jews run the world?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GG7nSBgvGVc>

Anonymous5 !!9O2tecpDHQ6 ID: uLKrcwL4 Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:33:51 No.107266097 Report

Quoted By: >>107266239

>>107265976

It's related to it.

What I revealed in the OP is very real.

View SameOCRGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace jar lamp.jpg, 286KiB, 1500x993

Anonymous ID: qXhYTkZS Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:33:55 No.107266108 Report

Quoted By: >>107266346

>>107265904

I am telling you mate, I am lamp, why are you not not believing me? You shitpost to discredit my attempts at spreading light of truth!

Anonymous5 !!9O2tecpDHQ6 ID: uLKrcwL4 Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:34:48 No.107266217 Report

>>107266062

Truman Show(Hollywood/Celebs) & They Live(MSM/Government systems).

Very fascinating stuff.

View SameGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace Novelty-penis-lamp-682x1024.jpg, 95KiB, 682x1024

Anonymous ID: TDOF2v7E Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:34:57 No.107266237 Report

Quoted By: >>107266361

>>107265716

the Revelation is something that is lived.

The End Times begin when you let them begin.

And at the centre of it all is the Eye.

View SameOCRGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace how to draw a lamp.jpg, 62KiB, 900x1440

Anonymous ID:qXhYTkZS Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:34:57 No.107266239 Report

>>107266097

it is all lies, only lamps are real

Anonymous5 !!9O2tecpDHQ6 ID:uLKrcwL4 Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:35:21 No.107266297

Report

Quoted By: >>107267045

>>107266091

No & please read the thread I made recently about "The jews":

<http://archive.4plebs.org/pol/search/subject/knowledge%20bomb/username/anonymous5/tripcode/%21%219O2tecpDHQ6/>

Anonymous ID:gAbrlZLs Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:35:34 No.107266314 Report

Quoted By: >>107266608

>>107258096

Bumping threads that you hate with your autistic trigger rage.

Nice.

Anonymous ID:n/3NU5d0 Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:35:49 No.107266346 Report

Quoted By: >>107266540

>>107266108

Answer my question, lamp. Are you at home? Do you live alone, lamp?

View SameGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace adesso hamilton.jpg, 6KiB, 233x233

Anonymous ID:qXhYTkZS Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:35:58 No.107266361 Report

Quoted By: >>107266730

>>107266237

and at the enter of the eye is the lamp

and it casts shadow

and it is all bullshit and LARPing

Anonymous ID:+L0rApCn Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:36:07 No.107266383 Report

Quoted By: >>107266608 >>107267144

>>107256907

what children? Do the govorment or Some type of cartels produce them?

Anonymous ID:pi12avYz Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:36:09 No.107266387 Report

Quoted By: >>107266642 >>107267067

>>107265995

>Spacetime is curved

This is so ridiculous. Time and space are distinct. Time is not a physical property; time is the measure of motion/movement and can measure it only and exactly because it is essentially distinct. You're confusing the yard stick with the yard.

>>107266000

And checked.

Bengali Apostate ID:prpddnYS Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:37:01 No.107266492 Report

Quoted By: >>107266822

Mr. 5, how old are the dinobirds? They seem to be exactly the same as terror birds, some of whom survived into the last ice age. I'm not sure I believe muh 65 million or anything about geologic history. Care to shed the light? Am I on the right track? Are they also lying about continental drift?

View SameGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace large curve floor lamp.jpg, 4KiB, 224x336

Anonymous ID:qXhYTkZS Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:37:26 No.107266540 Report

Quoted By: >>107266924

>>107266346

No, I live in lamp warehouse with my friends, lamps and lighbulbs and we have fun illuminating stuff and we really hate power outages

Anonymous ID:07jyqT/j Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:37:37 No.107266567 Report

Quoted By: >>107266821 >>107266822

>>107264428

I don't care about Anon5 or any other person who posts information on this website. He's not, in my mind, some "enlightened truth teller."

All I care about is the information itself.

He could post under a completely different persona with its own unique writing style, and I would still read these threads, and absorb and synthesize the information with things I've read in the past because it resonates with me on a subconscious level.

Does that mean it's necessary 100% true? No. But the fact that people are here actively trying to discredit it raises some interesting questions, and inspires me even more to do independent research after the thread 404s.

Anonymous5 !!9O2tecpDHQ6 ID:uLKrcwL4 Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:37:54 No.107266608 Report

Quoted By: >>107267175

>>107266383

All the Children that go missing in the world.

>>107266314

The shills got extremely upset that I revealed this Information about Hollywoods Truman Show.

View SameGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace wrong.gif, 1MiB, 480x287

Anonymous ID:pi12avYz Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:38:02 No.107266625 Report

>>107266062

>Meaning: Magicians would make their magic wands out of holly wood.

Hollywood = Holy Wood and is a reference to the Cross.

Holiday = Holy Day.

Anonymous ID:iW4hjyRI Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:38:08 No.107266633 Report

>>107255602

Hello Anon5, thank you for these threads. I've been reading some stuff and had some questions ready in a notepad for the next time I caught one of your posts. Sorry to bother, and thanks in advance for answering.

>1)

Is your life in danger at any point? Does your knowledge put you in danger? What are the odds someone could someday post with your same tripcode?

>2)

What's your opinion on ideal form of government? Is true democracy the best current one, like Switzerland? What about weapons? Are forbidden it to extremes (like UK and Germany) a negative form of control that should be fought?

>3)

What's up with Assange? Why not show his face by literally the easiest way possible, i.e. peering through his damn window? What kind of game is that? PsyOp?

>4)

Any computer software you recommend? Any you think should never ever be used? What about websites?

>5)

Should I ever donate blood? Should I mark my organ donor card as "Take everything"?

>6)

I'm a firm believer of eugenics being the future of civilization and a big part of progress. What markers / diseases / issues should I look for that would indicate "Do not reproduce"? Should I even send my DNA sample to one of those american companies that tell me what all those genetic markers mean for me?

>7)

If birth control (amongst other things) cause frontal lobe damage, what's the optimal way to sabotage the birth rates of violent and culturally destructive individuals? Religion? Disease? Inb4 Abstinence.

>8)

What can I do to contribute? I'm a 30-year-old male who has no career working an alright job, but I hate it. I have decided to fake my way into government-given NEETbux and become a hikikomori (recluse). Do you think I shouldn't do it? Why not? What can a friendless asocial person like me do to improve the world? (Outside of reading, getting informed and spreading the knowledge).

View SameGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace Kensington+3+Piece+Table+and+Flo (...).jpg, 15KiB, 225x225

Anonymous ID:qXhYTkZS Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:38:12 No.107266642 Report

>>107266387

>Time and space are distinct

fool, time and space are lamps!

View SameGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace Coolidge_after_signing_indian_tr (...).jpg, 46KiB, 620x693

[The image is a black and white photograph featuring a man in a suit and hat. He is smiling and appears to be in a celebratory mood, as indicated by his raised hand and

the hat he is holding up. The man is wearing a double-breasted suit jacket with a visible pocket on the right side. The suit jacket has a visible lapel, and the man is wearing a tie with a pattern that is not fully visible. The background of the image is out of focus, but it appears to be an outdoor setting with a fence and trees. The style of the image suggests it might be a vintage photograph, possibly from the early to mid-20th century. There are no discernible texts or logos in the image.]

Anonymous ID:M+AiWKKJ Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:38:58 No.107266730 Report

Quoted By: >>107266974

>>107266361

i really love your lamps sir

View SameOCRGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace americajones.jpg, 144KiB, 1697x687

Anonymous ID:WcsMdBmg Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:39:00 No.107266739 Report

What is the significance of 1991 VG?

Anonymous ID:gAbrlzLs Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:39:09 No.107266764 Report

Quoted By: >>107267020

>>107255602

Not related to this particular thread but was meaning to ask you... Merkel has officially announced the need for the EU army now. Does this mean that the ISIS cells will be awakened in Europe soon?

View SameOCRGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace Bread_and_Circus.png, 380KiB, 681x403

Anonymous ID:vM5faN6Y Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:39:20 No.107266786 Report

>>107266062

Hidden in plain sight...

Also I agree with this anon; Thanks as usual, A5.

View SameGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace Logan-29-inch-Natural-Slate-Tabl (...).jpg, 12KiB, 250x250

Anonymous ID:qXhYTkZS Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:39:31 No.107266821 Report

>>107266567

>All I care about is the information itself.

there is none

it is all assumptions, smoke and mirrors

sometimes weird assumptions, sometimes blatant bullshit

Anonymous5 !!9O2tecpDHQ6 ID:uLKrcwL4 Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:39:31 No.107266822 Report

Quoted By: >>107267039 >>107267479 >>107269132

>>107266492

Older then Terror Birds & you are on the right track interms of thinking.

>>107266567

If my information wasn't accurate, I wouldn't be getting as shilled as I have been.

Anonymous ID:k2JDI0d3 Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:39:58 No.107266884 Report

Quoted By: >>107267331

>>107255602

>late to another anon5 thread

Guess I'll be catching up here, good to see you back as usual and have a bump

Anonymous ID:n/3NU5d0 Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:40:17 No.107266924 Report

Quoted By: >>107267090

>>107266540

Oh, splendid. You are by yourself. And will be for a long time. Have you been enjoying that food you've been eating? Or do you just mindlessly stuff it into your fat face. What else do you consume? Lots of things, I imagine.

View SameGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace rain clear.jpg, 184KiB, 1000x1000

Anonymous ID:qXhYTkZS Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:40:39 No.107266974 Report

>>107266730

thanks

have a picture of my son, he was assembled just yesterday

but pls do not fap to it

Anonymous5 !!9O2tecPDHQ6 ID:uLKrcwL4 Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:41:01 No.107267020 Report

>>107266764

Europe is heading for some interesting times.

Bengali Apostate ID:prpddnYS Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:41:14 No.107267039 Report

Quoted By: >>107267331

>>107266822

Is male genital mutilation an ancient psyop for social engineering and controlling men and sexuality?

Anonymous ID:77ZPjnCr Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:41:14 No.107267040 Report

Quoted By: >>107267331

>>107266000

Is there something huge that is going to happens at the peace treaty Israel/Palestine ?

View SameOCRGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace its-the-illuminati-its-the-mason (...).png, 72KiB, 500x363

Anonymous ID:gno8ZDT6 Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:41:16 No.107267045 Report

Quoted By: >>107267331

>>107266297

Oh so you're just an Infowars Alex Jones retard type who does anything but name the Jew, and instead focuses on "globalists". Got it.

Yeah I guess that whole "WW2" thing was about nothing.

View SameGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace One_Ring_To_Rule_Them_All.gif, 1017KiB, 500x208

Anonymous ID:TDOF2v7E Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:41:28 No.107267067 Report

Quoted By: >>107267497 >>107268121

>>107266387

Timespace is one. Gravity is the curvature of the geometry of this aether.

And it curves because it's cyclical.

And quite absurd.

((They)) don't want you to look at the ring. For it binds you.

Anonymous ID:qXhYTkZS Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:41:40 No.107267090 Report

Quoted By: >>107267159

>>107266924

Why are you not believing that I am lamp? What is wrong with you?

pic related is my spouse, Anette

Anonymous ID:Ar/yIUlm Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:42:04 No.107267144 Report

Quoted By: >>107267724

>>107266383

Look up George Webb on Youtube, children from all over the world used as sexual blackmail by CIA and Dyncorp for politicians and maybe even organs.

Anonymous ID:JZDIXhsV Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:42:11 No.107267158 Report

Quoted By: >>107267300 >>107267724

>>107261158

>Just look at the people.

What people? The handlers? How to look at them, give us something man.

I saw Usher "discovered" Berber. so is it the older, recent celebrities that then become handlers when their limelight is out?

>>107262897

>Read the thread & wake the fuck up butter cup.

I've read the thread and been awake to the Jews most of my life. You're saying they are one ant of many. Ok. Can see all the globalists so I will consider it as a possibility, as well as the possibility, that you are running a Psyop. If you want to convince us, need more info. Are you saying the same thing about Hollywood, Jews there are ants in colony? Be careful don't discredit yourself.

3- is Kanye out of the loop now, do you mean. Or did you mean took him away literally, when they locked him in the nuthouse? Why won't he be performing at the inauguration, are they threatening him again? Are Kanyes redpills over?

>He did a good job with the movie & it helped a Actors career.

4-Carey looks like he left the system. Is he red pillled? It Would be ironic if the star they made with the Truman Show, became a voice against the real life show.

View SameGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace mini gaston.jpg, 14KiB, 408x306

Anonymous ID:qXhYTkZS Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:42:12 No.107267159 Report

Quoted By: >>107267792

>>107267090

fugg, forgot picture :DDDDD

Anonymous ID:k2JDIOd3 Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:42:20 No.107267175 Report

Quoted By: >>107267396 >>107267724

>>107266608

They've been upset at what you have revealed over the past week in general
View SameGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace ye olde.jpg, 5KiB, 224x224

Anonymous ID:qXhYTkZS Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:43:23 No.107267300 Report

>>107267158

>give us something man.

here, take this

it will enlighten your path towards light in the tunnel at the end of the road near
raspberry bushes of infinite bullshit

Anonymous5 !!9O2tecpDHQ6 ID:uLKrcwL4 Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:43:39 No.107267331
Report

Quoted By: >>107267830 >>107267864 >>107268165

>>107267045

You have so much to learn.

>>107266884

As you can tell, this threads information has really caused a stir.

>>107267039

Genital mutilation for both sex's is done for the same reasons, but with different
packaging.

>>107267040

Palestine has far more problems inside it then Israel outside it.

It's not a stable patch of land.

Anonymous ID:+L0rApCn Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:43:41 No.107267336 Report

Quoted By: >>107267533

>>107258136

what forms?

Who are the good guys? Is it Kim Jong Un?

View SameGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace AMARIS-table-lamp_1of3_220x220.jpg, 4KiB,
220x220

Anonymous ID:qXhYTkZS Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:44:04 No.107267396 Report

>>107267175

may it be because he told too little about lamps?

Anonymous ID:QumGYMcp Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:44:33 No.107267464 Report

>>107262590

>I imagine you being a nassally high pitched bore of human being that needs to spice
his mundane life by believing the snake oil of a schizophrenic

go back to tumblr with your faggot eloquency, moron. You didn't prove anything, just
attacked me,

>attacked

>by

>a

>fucking

>burger

Anonymous ID:81Sj635x Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:44:37 No.107267479 Report

Quoted By: >>107267981

>>107266822

Is this supposed to be entry level stuff?? I feel like most people on /pol/ know all of what you're saying here already. Is it meant to be a kick in the ass to get people doing research on things they suspect already?

With what you're saying about looking into the purpose of the origins of reoccurring threads, I'm wondering what your motivation for being here is. Is it the same motivation that creates hollow earth threads???

Anonymous ID:ofTu4/GH Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:44:43 No.107267487 Report

Quoted By: >>107267675 >>107267712 >>107267981 >>107268151

How exactly is Trump so healthy and energetic at his age?

View SameOCRGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace 01efd7d887cc2ef2192c5edd5253c627 (...).jpg, 120KiB, 577x1177

Anonymous ID:gxaH6nKP Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:44:47 No.107267497 Report

>>107267067

Thanks britbong.

Lookup ERIC DOLLARD

Have some interesting and insightful information rather than whatever these threads are vaguely discussing.

QM

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dEaecUuEqfc888>

Electricity8

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TttHkDRuyZwjI>

"Gravity" Black Holes

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wRsGPq77X0Q8>

Trump knew Truth on 911

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aoYXihwcp8c>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=23yfBWH8Hjk>

Global Hoaxing

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gh-DNNIUjKU>

<http://pastebin.com/iAWRb7Mx>

View SameGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace cameron.jpg, 457KiB, 1007x1500

Anonymous ID:qXhYTkZS Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:45:03 No.107267533 Report

>>107267336

only lamps are good guys

because there is nothing except lamps

get enlightened

Anonymous ID:pi12avYz Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:45:16 No.107267566 Report

>>107263634

>an artificial world

This isn't right. You can know the world is created but creation is vastly distinct from artificial production; artificial production requires creation but not the other way around. There can't be artificial production without first a creation that is subject to change/alteration.

Aristotle argued for a round earth based on the motion of the southern stars, which is still the big problem for flat Earthers, which they can't explain in their system. But Aristotle also believed in creation and a Creator - though he thought creation could have been from all eternity. But I do admit a lot of flat Earthers have done some really cool experiments.

Anonymous ID:JZDIXhsV Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:45:40 No.107267610 Report

Quoted By: >>107267981 >>107268248

>>107265038

Did they suicide Heath ledger, and why? Was he a sacrifice to moloch?

Anonymous ID:+LOrApCn Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:45:44 No.107267620 Report

Quoted By: >>107267829 >>107268065

>>107258237

What does

A.H

E.S

L.L

J.L

M.F

S.W

M.C

Stand for?

Anonymous ID:Ar/yIUlm Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:46:10 No.107267675 Report

>>107267487

A lot of these rich people are, It should tell people that eating cheap and fast food is no good.

View SameGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace concrete lamp.jpg, 528KiB, 1400x933

Anonymous ID:qXhYTkZS Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:46:28 No.107267712 Report

>>107267487

He is lamp

this is why his hair are so orange, they emit light

Anonymous5 !!9O2tecpDHQ6 ID:uLKrcwL4 Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:46:32 No.107267724 Report

Quoted By: >>107268165

>>107267144

Webb is a honeypot.

Notice how he talks about things.

>>107267158

- 1) Handlers, peoples appearances, etc
- 2) Jews are used in Hollywood to distract people & to keep certain systems running.
- 3) Kanye came from outside of the system
- 4) Very ironic.

>>107267175

Exactly.

Anonymous ID:n/3NU5d0 Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:47:10 No.107267792 Report

Quoted By: >>107268010

>>107267159

Then your light is limited to the room you are in. Soon you'll be shut off by your owner.
Have fun with that

View SameGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace bronze floor lamp.jpg, 7KiB, 400x400

Anonymous ID:qXhYTkZS Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:47:27 No.107267829 Report

>>107267620

those are lamp models

Quick, call the FBI!

Bengali Apostate ID:prpddnYS Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:47:27 No.107267830 Report

Quoted By: >>107268010

>>107267331

I once heard that the speed of light is not a constant and it varies in space.

Well, light bends, refracts, gets moved around by gravity etc. But every cosmological model assumes the same speed. And every model also assumes redshift when it's possible they might be stationary and we might be seeing light slow down as it loses energy. Maybe space isn't even a perfect vacuum and there is some aether. They could also be lying about muh relativity and who knows what else?

I just gave you an idea for a future knowledge bomb.

View SameOCRGogoleiqdbSauceNAOTrace 1437997308466.jpg, 4MiB, 5874x1596

Anonymous ID:gno8ZDT6 Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:47:44 No.107267864 Report

Quoted By: >>107267981 >>107268128

>>107267331

>You have so much to learn.

>"Pure coincidence"

Says Alex Jones.

Anonymous5 !!9O2tecPDHQ6 ID:uLKrcwL4 Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:48:40 No.107267981

Report

Quoted By: >>107268447

>>107267610

They wanted to end his show when he would be most profitable.

>>107267487

He has good energy & passion.

>>107267479

I'm just here to get information out.

>>107267864

Not my fault if the JC psy-op has effected you significantly.

View SameGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace hand-grenade-table-lamp-1.jpg, 33KiB, 410x410

Anonymous ID:qXhYTkZS Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:48:54 No.107268010 Report

Quoted By: >>107268342

>>107267792

I will defend myself!

>>107267830

>speed of light

can only be achieved by certain lamps, stay woke

Anonymous5 !!9O2tecpDHQ6 ID:uLKrcwL4 Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:48:59 No.107268026 Report

Quoted By: >>107268298

PAST THREADS TO DIG INTO:

<http://archive.4plebs.org/pol/search/subject/knowledge%20bomb/username/anonymous5/tripcode/%21%219O2tecpDHQ6/>

Anonymous ID:Cppvxe+ Sun 15 Jan 2017 21:49:02 No.107268034 Report

Quoted By: >>107268342

>>107258803

wasn't there something about the DC National Guard commander being relieved of duty midway through the ceremony?

View SameOCRGoogleiqdbSauceNAOTrace 1475601969522.jpg, 45KiB, 960x685

[The image is a digital composite of a man's face and upper body, with a focus on his mouth and eyes. The man is wearing a white baseball cap with the text "DELETE THIS RIGHT NOW" in blue letters. He is also wearing a dark suit with a white shirt underneath. In his right hand, he is holding a black gun with a visible trigger. The background is a plain, neutral color, which contrasts with the man's attire and the text on his cap. The style of the image is reminiscent of a meme or a satirical photograph, with the text on the cap being a humorous play on the phrase "delete this" which is often